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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN OWEN, D.D.

3616

EDITED

BY THOMAS RUSSELL, M.A.

WITH

MEMOIRS OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS,

BY WILLIAM ORME.

VOL. VII.

CONTAINING

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EXPLAINED AND CONFIRMED.

CHAP. XI.

The entrance into an answer to Mr. G.'s arguments against the doctrine of the saints' perseverance: his sixth argument about the usefulness of the doctrine under consideration to the work of the ministry, proposed. His proof of the minor proposition; considered and answered. Many pretenders to promote godliness by false doctrines. Mr. G.'s common interest in this argument. His proofs of the usefulness of his doctrine unto the promotion of godliness; considered and answered. The inconsequence of his arguing discovered. The doctrine by him opposed, mistaken, ignorantly or wilfully. Objections proposed by Mr. G. to himself to be answered. The objection as proposed, disowned. Certainty of the love of God, in what sense a motive to obedience. The doctrine of apostacy denies the unchangeableness of God's love to believers: placeth qualifications in the room of persons. How the doctrine of perseverance promiseth the continuance of the love of God to believers. Certainty of reward, encouraging to regular actions. Promises made to persons qualified, not suspended upon those qualifications. Means appointed of God for the accomplishment of a determined end, certain. Means not always conditions. Mr. G.'s strange inference concerning the Scripture, considered. The word of God by him undervalued, and subjected to the judgment of vain men, as to its truth and authority. The pretended reason of the former proceeding discussed. The Scripture the sole judge of what is to be ascribed to God, and believed concerning him. The doctrine of the saints' perseverance, falsely imposed on, and vindicated. Mr. G.'s next objection made to himself, against his doctrine: its unseasonableness, as to the argument in hand, demonstrated. No assurance of the love of God, nor peace left the saints by the doctrine of apostacy. The ground of peace and assurance by it taken away. Ground of Paul's consolation; 1 Cor. ix. 27. *The meaning of the word ἀδόκιμος. Another plea against the doctrine attempted to be proved by Mr. G. That attempt considered. Not the weakness of the flesh naturally, but the strength of lust spiritually pretended. The cause of sin in the saints farther discussed. The power ascribed by Mr. G. to men, for the strengthening and making willing the Spirit in them, considered. The aptness of the saints to perform, what, and whence. The opposition they have in them thereunto. Gospel obedience how easy. The conclusion. Answer to* chap. xiii. *of his book proposed.*

THE argument, wherein Mr. Goodwin exposeth the doctrine under contest to the trial, concerning its usefulness, as to

the promotion of godliness, in the hearts and ways of them by whom it is received, he thus proposeth. chap. 13. sect. 32. p. 333. 'That doctrine, which is according to godliness, and whose natural and proper tendency is to promote godliness in the hearts and lives of men, is evangelical, and of unquestionable comportance with the truth; such is the doctrine which teacheth the possibility of the saints' declining, both totally and finally:' *ergo.*

Of this argument he goeth about to establish the respective propositions, so as to make them serviceable to the enforcement of the conclusion he aimeth at, for the exaltation of the Helena, whereon he is enamoured: and for the major proposition (about which, rightly understood, we are remote from contesting with him or any else, and will willingly and cheerfully at any time drive the cause in difference to issue, upon the singular testimony of the truth wrapped up in it) he thus confirmeth it.

'The reason of the major proposition, though the truth of it needed no light but its own to be seen by, is, because the gospel itself is a doctrine which is according unto godliness, a ministry of godliness; is a doctrine, truth, and mystery, calculated, contrived, and framed by God with a singular aptness, and choiceness of ingredients, for the advancement of godliness in the world; therefore what particular doctrine is of the same Spirit, tendency, and import, must needs be a natural branch thereof, and hath perfect accord with it; this proposition then is unquestionable.'

Ans. According to the principles formerly laid down, I have something to say (though not to the proposition itself, as in the terms it lieth, but) only as to the fixedness and staidness of it, that it may not be a nose of wax, to be turned to and fro at every one's pleasure, to serve their turns; for what sort of men is there in the world professing the name of Christ, that do not lay claim to an interest in this proposition, for the confirmation of their opinions. It is but as a common exordium in rhetoric, a useless flourish; the doctrine which is according to godliness, that is, which the Scripture teacheth to be true, and to serve for the promotion of godliness (not what doctrine soever any dark brain-sick creature doth apprehend so to do), in the state and condition wherein the saints of God walk with him, is a branch of the

gospel: I add, in the state and condition, wherein we walk with God; for in the state of innocency, the doctrine of the law, as a covenant of life, was of singular aptness, and usefulness to promote obedience, which yet is not therefore any branch or part of the gospel, but opposite to it, and destructive of it. All the advantage then Mr. Goodwin can expect from this argument to his cause, dependeth upon the proof of the minor proposition, which also must be effected in answerable proportion to the restrictions and qualifications given to the major, or the whole will be void and of none effect. That is, he must prove it by the testimony of God, to be according to godliness, and not give us in (by a pure begging of the thing in question), that it is so in his apprehension, and according to the principles whereon he doth proceed, in the teaching and asserting of godliness. Mr. Goodwin knows that there is no less difference between him and us, about the nature and causes of godliness, than there is about the perseverance of the saints; and therefore his asserting any doctrine to be suited to the promotion of godliness, that assertion being proportioned to his other hypothesis of his own, wherein we accord not with him, and in particular to his notions of the causes and nature of godliness, with which conceptions of his we have no communion, it cannot be of any weight with us, unless he prove his affirmation according to the limitations before expressed; now this he attempteth in the words following:

'What doctrine,' saith he, 'can there be more proper and powerful to promote godliness, in the hearts and lives of men, than that, which on the one hand, promiseth a crown of blessedness and eternal glory to those that live godlily without declining; and on the other hand, threateneth the vengeance of hell fire eternally against those, that shall turn aside into profaneness, and not return by repentance: whereas the doctrine which promiseth, and that with all possible certainty and assurance, all fulness of blessedness and glory, to those that shall at any time be godly, though they shall the very next day or hour degenerate, and turn loose, and profane; and continue never so long in such a course, is most manifestly destructive to godliness, and encouraging above measure unto profaneness.'

Ans. There are two parts of this discourse: the one

(κατασκευαστικὴ, or) confirmatory of his own thesis; the other (ἀνασκευαστικὴ, or) destructive of that which he opposeth: for the first, it is upon the matter all that he produceth for the confirmation of his minor proposition, wherein any singular concernment of his opinion doth lie: now that being, in a sound sense, the common inheritance of all that profess the truth, under what deceits or mistakes soever; the sum of what is here insisted on, is, that the doctrine he maintaineth concerning 'the possibility of the saints' defection, promiseth a crown to them that continue in obedience, and threateneth vengeance of fire to them that turn to profaneness,' which taken as a proof of his former assertion is liable to some small exceptions. As,

1. That this doth not at all prove the doctrine to be a branch or parcel of the gospel, it being, as it standeth severally by itself, the pure tenor of the covenant of works, which we confess to have been of singular importance for the propagation of godliness and holiness, in them to whom it was given, or with whom it was made; being given and made for that very end and purpose; but that this alone by itself is a peculiar branch or parcel of the gospel, or that it is of such singular importance for the carrying on of gospel-obedience, as so by itself proposed, that should here have been proved.

2. As it is also a part of the gospel declaring the faithfulness of God, and the end and issue of the proposal of the gospel unto men, and of their receiving or refusing of it, so it is altogether foreign to the doctrine of Mr. Goodwin under contest: and he might as well have said, that the doctrine of apostacy is of singular import for the promotion of holiness, because the doctrine of justification by faith is so; for what force of consequence is betwixt these two? That God is a rewarder of them that obey him, and a punisher of them that rebel against him, is an incentive to obedience: therefore the doctrine that true believers united to Jesus Christ, may utterly fall out of the favour of God, and turn from their obedience, and be damned for ever, there being no promise of God for their preservation, is also an incentive to holiness.

3. What virtue soever there may be in this truth, for the therance and promotion of holiness in the world, our doc-

trine layeth as clear claim to it as yours; that is, there is not any thing in the least in it inconsistent therewithal; we grant, God threateneth the vengeance of hell fire unto those that turn aside from their profession of holiness, into profaneness, the gospel itself becoming thereby unto them 'a savour of death unto death;' the Lord thereby proclaiming to all the world, that the 'wages of sin' and infidelity is death, and that 'he that believeth not, shall be damned;' but that any thing can hence be inferred for the apostacy of true believers, or how this assertion cometh to be appropriated to that doctrine, we see not.

The latter part of this discourse, whereby its author aimeth to exclude the doctrine hitherto asserted by us, from any claim laid to usefulness for the promotion of godliness, is either a mistake of it, through ignorance of the opinion he hath undertaken to oppose, or a wilful perverting of it, contrary to his own science and conscience. Is that the doctrine you oppose? Is it so proposed by those who through grace have laboured to explain and vindicate it? Doth not the main weight of the doctrine turn on this hinge, that God hath promised to his saints, true believers, such supplies of the Spirit and grace, as that they shall never degenerate unto such loose and profane courses, as are destructive to godliness? Doubtless that doctrine is of a most spotless untainted innocency, which its adversaries dare not venture to strangle, before they have violently and treacherously deflowered it.

And thus Mr. Goodwin leaveth his arguments in the dust, like the ostriches' eggs under the feet of men, to be trampled on with ease.

The residue of this discourse onwards to the next argument, being spent in the answering of pretended objections, put in against himself in the behalf of the doctrine of perseverance, not at all called out by the import of his present arguments and discourses, I might pass them over: but inasmuch as that which is spoken thereunto, tendeth to the farther clearing of what formerly hath been evidenced, concerning the suitableness of the doctrine contended for, unto the promotion of holiness, I shall farther consider what he draweth forth on this occasion. Sect. 33. he giveth us an objection; and a fourfold answer thereunto, pp. 333—335.

That which he calleth an objection he layeth down in these words:

'If it be objected and said: yea, but assurance of the unchangeableness of God's love towards him that is godly, is both a more effectual and persuading motive unto godliness, and more encouraging to a persevering in godliness, than a doubtfulness or uncertainty, whether God will be constant in his affection, to such a man or no; certainty of reward is more encouraging unto action, than uncertainty.'

Ans. If any one hath been so weak, as to make use of this plea in behalf of that doctrine it seemeth to defend (which I scarcely believe), it will, I doubt not, be an easy task to undertake, that he shall be no more admitted, or entertained, as an advocate in this cause. The assurance of the unchangeableness of God's love to them that are godly, is but one part of the doctrine in hand, and that such as may perhaps be common to it with that which is brought into competition with it. It is the assurance of the unchangeableness of God's love to a man, to keep him up to godliness, to preserve him in that state and condition of holiness to the end, and of the certainty of the continuance of the love of God unto him, on that account and in that way, that is that great gospel motive to obedience, wherein, as its peculiar, our doctrine glorieth, as hath formerly been manifested. Perhaps Mr. Goodwin doth not think, that any man is bound to lay more blocks in his own way, than he judgeth himself well able to remove; and therefore he framed that objection so, that he might be sure to return at least a specious answer thereunto, and this he attempteth accordingly, and telleth us in his first paragraph three things:

1. 'That the doctrine teaching the saints' defection, doth also maintain the unchangeableness of the love of God, to them that are godly.'

Ans. But what love (I pray you) is that, which when it might prevent it, will yet suffer those godly ones, to become such ungodly villains and wretches, as that it shall be utterly impossible for the Lord to continue his love to them? Is the love you mention indeed a love to their persons, or only an approbation of their duties and qualifications? If the first, whence is it that God ceaseth at any time to love them? Doth he change, and alter his love like the sons of men? Why,

they change, therefore he changeth also. That God changeth not, and therefore we, who are subject to change, are yet preserved from being consumed, we have heard; but that upon the change that is in men, God also should change, we are yet to be instructed; and the immutability of God, hath taken greater hold upon our understandings and in our hearts, than that we should easily receive any thing so diametrically opposite thereunto. If the love mentioned be only an approbation of the qualifications that are in them, and of the duties that they do perform, then is it no more a love to them or to their persons, than it is to the persons of the most profligate wretches that live. The object is duty, solely wherever it may be found, and not any person at all; for it is an act of God's approving, not purposing or determining, will. This is not our sense of the continuance of the love of God to them that are godly; so that there is no comparison betwixt the doctrines under contest, as to the asserting of the love of God to believers, or to them that are godly. Wherefore, he saith,

2. 'That the doctrine he opposeth, promiseth God's love and the unchangeable continuance of it unto men, though they change to profaneness.' Though this is said over and over a hundred times, yet I cannot believe it, because the doctrine openly affirmeth the continuance of the love of God to them that are godly, to be effectually and eventually preventive of any such profaneness, as is inconsistent therewithal; and therefore much more vain is that, which he affirmeth in the third place:

3. Namely, That 'the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, doth not so much absolutely promise the love of God to them that are godly, as it promiseth it conditionally to them that are profane, in case they have been godly; that is, it teacheth that God promiseth the certain continuance of his love to him that is godly, on condition he cease to be so and turn profane.'

'Claudite jam rivos pueri'———we have enough of this already.

2. He addeth yet, 'Neither is certainty of reward, in every sense or kind, more encouraging unto action, than uncertainty in some kind; to promise with all possible assurance, the same reward or prize to him that shall not run in

the race, which is promised to him that shall run, is not more encouraging unto men, thus to run, than to promise it conditionally upon their running, which is a promising of it with uncertainty in this respect, because it is uncertain whether men will run in the said race, or no; and consequently, whether they shall receive the said prize or no, upon such a promise. Uncertainty of reward is then, and in such cases, more encouraging unto action than certainty, when the certainty of obtaining or receiving it, is suspended upon the act, not when it is assured unto men whether they act or no.'

Ans. 1. Persuade your servants, your labourers, if you can, of that great encouragement that lies in the uncertainty of a reward, above that which may be had from an assurance thereof: we are not as yet of that mind; and yet,

2. We do not lay the only motive unto obedience, tendered by the doctrine we contest for, on the certainty of reward which it asserteth; which yet is such, that without it all other must needs be of little purpose; but it hath also other advantageous influences into the promotion of holiness, which in part have been insisted on.

3. It seemeth, we say that God promiseth 'a reward to them that shall not run a race,' because we maintain, that he promiseth it to none, but those who do run in a race; promising withal to give them strength, power, and will, that they may do so to the end.

2. For the close, which amounteth to this, that the certainty of reward, when it is uncertain (for so it is made to be when it is suspended on actions that are uncertain) is more encouraging to action, than certainty of reward not so suspended; I shall add only (because I know not indeed how this discourse hangeth on the business under consideration), that we neither suspend the certainty of reward upon our actions in the sense intimated, neither do we say, that it is assured to men whether they act or no; but say, that the reward which is of grace, through the unchangeable love of God, shall be given to them that act in holiness, and
gh the same love shall all believers be kept to such an
of holiness, as God thinketh good to carry them out
for the 'fulfilling of all the good pleasure of his good-
them, and making them meet for the inheritance of

his saints in light;' we do not think mediums designed of God for the accomplishment of any end, are such conditions of the end, that it is suspended on them in uncertainty, in respect of the issue before its accomplishment. Neither do we grant, nor can it be proved, that God assigneth any medium for the accomplishment of a determinate end (such as we have proved the salvation of all believers to be), and leave it in such a condition, as that not only it shall be effected and produced, suitably to the nature of the immediate cause of which it is, whether free, necessary, or contingent, but also shall be so far uncertain, as that it may or may not, be wrought and accomplished.

The former part of this third paragraph is but a repetition of an assertion, which upon the credit of his own single testimony, we have had often tendered; viz. 'That an assurance given him that is godly, of the love of God, not depending on any thing in him, which it is uncertain whether he will perform or no, is no motive to men to continue in the ways of holiness.' This (as I said before) I cannot close withal; that that which is a motive to faith and love, and eminently suited to the stirring of them up, and setting them on work, is also a motive to the obedience, which is called love and obedience of faith, hath been declared. If there be any thing of the new and heavenly nature in the soul, any quality or disposition of a child therein, what can be more effectual to promote or advance the fear, honour, and reverence of God in it, than an assurance of his Spirit to continue and preserve them in those ways which are well pleasing unto him. It is confessed, that in many promises of acceptation here and reward hereafter, the things and duties, that are the means and ways of enjoying the one, and attaining the other, are mentioned not as conditions of the grace and love of God to them, to whom the promises are made, as though they should depend on any thing of their uncertain accomplishment as hath been declared, but only as the means and ways, which God hath appointed for men to use, and walk in unto those ends, and which he hath absolutely promised to work in them, and to continue to them.

4. The close of this paragraph, in the fourth place, deserveth a little more clear consideration, it containing an

assertion which some would not believe, when it was told them, and hath stumbled not a few at the repetition of it. Thus then he proceedeth.

'Besides, whether any such assurance of the unchangeableness of the love of God towards him that is godly, as the objection speaketh of, can be effectually, and upon sufficient grounds cleared and proved, is very questionable, yea, I conceive there is more reason to judge otherwise than so. Yea, that which is more, I verily believe, that in case any such assurance of the unchangeableness of God's love, were to be found in, or could regularly be deduced from, the Scriptures, it were a just ground, to any intelligent and considering man, to question their authority, and whether they were from God or no; for, that a God infinitely righteous and holy, should irreversibly assure the immortal and undefiled inheritance of his grace and favour, unto any creature whatsoever; so that though this creature should prove never so abominable in his sight, never so outrageously and desperately wicked and profane, he should not be at liberty to withhold his inheritance from him, is a saying doubtless too hard for any man, who rightly understandeth and considereth the nature of God, to bear.'

Ans. The love mentioned in the foregoing objection, is that which God beareth to them that are godly in Jesus Christ, exerting itself partly in his gracious acceptation of their persons in the Son of his love, partly in giving to them of his Holy Spirit and grace, so that they shall never depart utterly and wickedly from him, and forsake him, or reject him from being their God. 'Whether an assurance of this love may on good grounds, be given to believers, hath been already considered, and the affirmative, I hope in some good measure confirmed. The farther demonstration of it awaiting its proper season, which the will of God shall give unto it. This Mr. Goodwin saith to him is questionable; yea, I suppose it is with him out of question, that it cannot be, else surely he would not have taken so much pains in labouring to disprove it; and that this is his resolved judgment, he manifesteth in the next words, 'I verily believe, that in case any such assurance were to be found in,' &c. That is, 'Si Deus homini non placuerit, Deus non erit.' What more contemptible could the Pagans of old have

spoken of their dunghill deities, with their amphibolous oracles? were it not fitter language for the Indian conjurors, who beat and afflict their hellish gods, if they answer not according to their desires? The whole authority of God, and of his word in the Scriptures, is here cast down before the consideration of an intelligent man (forsooth) or 'a vain man, that would be wise, but is like the wild ass's colt;' and this intelligent man, it seems, may contend to reject the word of God, and yet be accounted most wise; of old, the prophet thought not so. To what end is any farther dispute? If the Scripture speaketh not to Mr. Goodwin's mind (for doubtless he is an intelligent and considering man), he seeth sufficient ground to question its authority. By what way possible, any man can more advance himself into the throne of God, than by entertaining such thoughts and conceptions as these, I know not. An intelligent man is supposed to have from himself, and his own wisdom and intelligence, considerations of God's nature and perfection, by which he is to regulate and measure all things, that are affirmed of God, or his will, in the Scripture. If what is so delivered suit these conceptions of his, that Scripture wherein it is delivered may pass for canonical and authentic; if otherwise, 'eadem facilitate rejicitur qua asseritur;' which was sometimes spoken of traditionals; but it seems may now be extended to the written word. The Scripture is supposed to hold out things contrary to what this intelligent man hath conceived and considered, and this is asserted as a just ground to question its authority. And if this be not a progress in the contempt of the word of God to whatever yet Papists, Socinians, or enthusiasts have attempted, I am deceived. 'To the law and to the testimony,' with all the conceptions and notions of the most intelligent man, 'if they answer not to this rule, it is because there is no truth in them.'

But he addeth the reason of this bold assertion: for, saith he, 'That a God infinitely righteous and holy, should irreversibly,' &c.

Ans. Neither yet doth this at all mend the matter. Neither doth the particular instance given alter at all, but confirm, the first general assertion: viz. that 'if there be any thing in the Scriptures contrary to those thoughts of God,

which an intelligent man (without the Scripture) doth conceive of him, he hath just grounds to question their authority,' which wholly casts down the word of God from its excellency, and setteth a poor, dark, blind creature, under the notion of an intelligent man, at liberty from his subjection thereunto, making him his own rule and guide as to his apprehensions of God and his will: and is it possible that such a thought should enter into the heart of a man fearing God, and reverencing his word, which God hath magnified above all his name? There is scarce any one truth in the whole book of God, but some men, passing in the world for intelligent and considering men, do look upon it and profess it to be unworthy of an infinitely righteous and holy God. So do the Socinians think of the doctrine of the satisfaction of Christ, the great treasure of the church; at the rate that men pass at in this world, it will be difficult to exclude many of them from the number of intelligent and considering men; and are they not all absolved here by Mr. G. in this principle, from bowing to the authority of God in the Scriptures, having just ground to question, whether they are from God or no. The case is the same with the Papists and others in sundry particulars. Frame the supposition how you will, in things never so uncouth and strange, yet if this be the position, that in things which appear so to men, upon their consideration, if any thing in the Scripture be held out, or may be deduced from this to the contrary, they are at liberty from submitting their understandings to them, and may arraign them as false and supposititious, their whole divine authority is unquestionably cast down to the ground, and trampled on by the feet of men. Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν πρὸς ταῦτα. God will take care for the vindication of the honour of his word.

2. The opposition here made by Mr. Goodwin, and imposed on his adversaries, is, as hath been shewed, wretchedly false, not once spoken or owned by them with whom he hath to do, not having the least colour given unto it by the doctrine they maintain; yea, is diametrically opposite thereunto. The main of what they teach, and which Mr. Goodwin hath opposed in this treatise, endeavouring to answer that eminent place of 1 John iii. 9. with many others produced and argued to that purpose, is, that God will, ac-

cording to the tenor of the covenant of grace, so write his law in the hearts of his, and put his fear in their inward parts, that they shall never depart from him, so as to become desperately and outrageously profane, but be preserved such to the end, as that the Lord with the greatest advantage of glory to his infinite wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, may irreversibly assure the immortal inheritance of his love and favour unto them. So that Mr. Goodwin's discourse to the end of this section, concerning the continuance of the love of God to them that are wicked, with an equal measure of favour to them that are godly, according to this doctrine, is vain and grossly sophistical, and such as he himself knoweth to be so. To say, 'every one that doth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and that he delighteth in him,' that is, he approveth wicked and ungodly men, we know is sufficiently dishonourable to him: but yet to say that he delighteth in his church and people, washed and made holy in the blood of Christ, notwithstanding their failings, or their being sometime overtaken with great sins, when he pleaseth, in an extraordinary way, for ends best known to himself, to permit them to fall into them (which yet he doth seldom and rarely), is that which himself affirmeth and ascribeth to himself in innumerable places of Scripture (if their authority may pass unquestioned), to the praise of the glory of his grace. But it seemeth, if we take any care, that Mr. Goodwin may not call the authority of the Scriptures into question (being fully resolved, that the doctrine of the saints' perseverance is unworthy of a holy and righteous God), we must give over all attempts of farther deducing it from them; but yet for the present, we shall consider what he hath farther to object against it.

Sect. 34. He farther objecteth against himself and his doctrine, in the behalf of that which he doth oppose in these words:

'It is possible, that yet some will farther object against the argument in hand; unless the saints be assured of the perpetuity of their standing in the grace and favour of God, they must needs be under fears of falling away, and so of perishing; and fear we know is of a discouraging and enfeebling nature; an enemy unto such actions, which men of confidence and courage are apt to undertake.'

Ans. What this objection maketh in this place, I know not; it neither asserteth any eminency in the doctrine by Mr. Goodwin opposed, as to the promotion of godliness, nor immediately challengeth that which he doth maintain of a contrary tendency, but only intimateth, that the saints' consolation and peace is weakened by unnecessary fears, such as his opinion is apt to ingenerate in them; but however thus far I own it, as to the main of the observation in hand, that the doctrine of the apostacy of believers is apt and suited to cut the saints of God and heirs of the promise short of that strong consolation, which he is so abundantly willing that they should receive, and to fill their souls and perplex their consciences with cares, fears, and manifold entanglements, suited to weaken their faith and love, and alienate their hearts from that delight in God, which they are called, and otherwise would be carried forth, unto. They being all of them in some measure acquainted with the strength, subtilty, and power of indwelling sin, the advantages of Satan in his manifold temptations, the eminent success which they see every day the 'principalities and powers in heavenly places,' which they wrestle withal, to have against them, and being herewithal taught, that there is neither purpose nor promise of God for their preservation, that there is nothing to that purpose in the covenant of grace; the consideration of their condition must of necessity fill them with innumerable perplexities, and make them their own tormentors all their days; thus far, I say, I own the objection; that it is not properly courage or confidence, but faith, love, and reverence, that are the principles of our actions in walking with God, hath been declared.

But what saith Mr. Goodwin to the objection, as by himself laid down? beside what he relateth, of his conquest of it in other places, he addeth,

'That the saints, notwithstanding the possibility of their final falling away, have, or may have, such an assurance of the perpetuity of their standing, in the grace and favour of God, as may exclude all fear, at least that which is of a discouraging or enfeebling nature; the apostle, as we have formerly shewed, lived at a very excellent rate both of courage and confidence; notwithstanding he knew that it was possible for him to become a reprobate; the assurance he had,

that upon a diligent use of those means, which he knew assuredly God would vouchsafe unto him, he should prevent his being a reprobate, was a golden foundation unto him, of that confidence and courage wherein he equalized the holy angels themselves.'

Ans. The grounds asserted by Mr. Goodwin, on which believers may build the assurance pretended, of the perpetuity of their standing in the grace and favour of God, notwithstanding the possibility of their defection (the assertion whereof costs no less, than the denying of all, or any influence from the purpose, promises, covenant, or oath of God, or mediation of Christ, into their preservation), I have formerly considered: and manifested them to be so exceeding unable to bear any such building of confidence upon, as is pretended, that it is almost a miracle how any thoughts of such a structure on such quicksands, could ever find place in the mind of a man any thing seriously acquainted with the ways of God; the whole of the saints' preservation in the love and favour of God (as it is also expressed in this section) is resolved into men's self-considerations, and endeavours. Being weary it seemeth of leaning on the power of God, to be kept thereby unto eternal salvation, men begin to trust to themselves, and their own abilities, to be their own keepers: but what will they do in the end thereof? The sum of what Mr. Goodwin hath formerly said and what he repeateth again to the end of this section, is, 'men need not fear their falling away, though it is possible, seeing they may easily prevent it, if they will;' expressions sufficiently contemptive of the grace of God, and the salvation that God assureth us thereby; an assertion, which those ancients, which Mr. Goodwin laboureth to draw into communion with him, would have rejected, and cast out as heretical. Man's ability thus to preserve himself in the grace and favour of God to the end, is either from himself, or from the grace of God? If from himself, let us know, what that ability is, and wherein it doth consist, and how he comes by it? Christ telleth us, that 'without him we can do nothing;' and the apostle, 'that we are not sufficient of ourselves to think a good thought, but that all our sufficiency is of God:' so that this self-ability for preservation, extendeth not to the thinking a good thought: indeed is nothing. Is it from the grace

of God? Then the assurance of it must be, either because God promised absolutely, so to 'work in him to will and to do of his own good pleasure,' as that he should certainly be preserved, which you will not say (as I suppose), or because he will so afford him his grace, as that he may make use of it to the end proposed, if he please: but now, what assurance hath he that he shall so make use of his grace, as to make it effectual for the end designed? And is this good use of grace, of himself, or of grace also? If of himself, it is nothing; as was shewed from that of our Saviour; John xv. 5. Neither can a man promise himself much assistance, from the ability of doing nothing at all. If you shall say it is of grace, the same question ariseth as formerly, manifesting that there is not the least assurance imaginable, of our continuance in the grace and favour of God, but what ariseth from his faithful promises (efficaciously overcoming all interveniences) that we shall so do.

2. He telleth us, that 'Paul lived at an excellent rate of assurance, and yet knew that it was possible for him to be a reprobate;' I confess indeed he lived at an excellent rate of assurance, which he manifesteth himself to have received upon such principles and foundations, as were common to him with all true believers; Rom. viii. 32—35. That it was possible in respect of the event, that he might have been a reprobate who was chosen from eternity, is not proved. He saith indeed, 1 Cor. ix. 27. 'I keep my body in subjection, lest by any means I should be found 'Αδόκιμος.' That by ἀδόκιμος there, any more is intended than not approved or accepted in that service he had in hand, Mr. Goodwin laboureth not to evince; and if that be the sense of the words (as the scope of the whole manifesteth it to be), then all that Paul there expresseth is, that he endeavoured always to approve himself, and by all means, an acceptable workman, not to be rejected, or disallowed in the labour of preaching the gospel which he had undertaken; and we acknowledge that this thought and contrivance may well become him, who liveth at the greatest rate of assurance that God affordeth to any here below; yea, that such thoughts and endeavours do naturally and genuinely flow from the assurance of the love of God we also grant. But yet, supposing that being a reprobate, by a metonymy of the effect, may here signify

to be damned, how doth this prove, that it was possible in respect of the event, that he should be damned? Why, because he laboured that he might not be so; that is, no man can use the means of avoiding any thing, but he must be uncertain, whether in the use of those means it may be avoided or no; this looketh like begging the thing in question; Paul labouring and endeavouring in the ways expressed, evidently manifesteth such a labour and endeavour, in such a way, to be the appointed means of avoiding the condition of being ἀδόκιμος. That there is an infallible connexion betwixt the use of such means, and the deliverance from that state, is proved. But that Paul had not assurance of the sufficiency of the grace of God with him, for his certain use of those means, and certain infallible deliverance from that end, nothing in the least is intimated in the text, or brought in from any place else, by Mr. Goodwin, to give colour thereunto. But of this Scripture at large afterward.

Supposing himself to have fairly quit himself of the former plea, in the behalf of our doctrine, as by himself proposed, he addeth another pretension in the behalf of the same plea formerly produced, which he attempteth also to take out of the way, having in some measure prepared it, in his proposal of it for an easy removal. Thus then he proceedeth; 'To pretend that the weakness of the flesh in the best of saints considered, and their aptness to go astray, they must needs lie under many troublesome and tormenting fears of perishing, unless they have some promise or assurance from God to support them, notwithstanding any declinings or goings astray incident unto them, yet they shall not lose his favour, or perish, is to pretend nothing but what hath been thoroughly answered already, especially in chap. 9.'

Ans. Before I can admit this plea to be put in, in our behalf, I shall crave leave a little to rectify, and point it more sharply against the doctrine it aimeth to oppose. I say then,

1. It is not the 'weakness of the flesh,' or the feebleness and disability of our natural man to act in, or go through with, great duties and trials, but the strength and wilfulness of the flesh, i. e. of the corrupted man, even in the best of saints, continually provoking and seducing them with sometimes an insuperable efficacy, leading them captive, and working

pretension from the strength of the flesh (yea, from the weakness of it) holdeth good against the saints' establishment in peace and assurance, upon the account of their being destitute of any promise of preservation by God.

2. 'If the saints be willing,' saith he, 'to strengthen the Spirit in them, and make him willing proportionably to the means prescribed, and vouchsafed unto them by God for such a purpose, this will fully balance the weakness of the flesh, and prevent the miscarriages and breaking out hereof; this I say then (saith the apostle), Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; and again, If you be led by the Spirit you are not under the law, and consequently, are in no danger of losing the favour of God, or of perishing for such sins, which under the conduct of the Spirit you are subject unto.'

Ans. But that all now must be taken in good part, and nothing called strange or uncouth, since we have passed the pikes in the last section, I should somewhat admire at the doctrine of this paragraph; for,

1. Here is a willing in reference to a great spiritual duty supposed in men, antecedent to any assistance of him who 'worketh to will and to do of his own good pleasure.' What he worketh, he worketh by the Spirit. But this is a willing in us, distinct from, and antecedent to, the appearing of the Spirit for the strengthening thereof.

2. That whereas we have hitherto imagined that the Spirit strengtheneth the saints, and that their supportment had been from him, as we partly also before declared (at least we did our mind to be so persuaded), it seemeth they 'strengthen the Spirit in them,' and not he them; how or by what means, or by what principles in them it is, that so they do, is not declared. Besides, what is here intended by the Spirit is not manifested; if it be the holy and blessed Spirit of God, he hath no need of our strengthening; he is able of himself, to 'make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light;' if it be the gracious principles that are bestowed upon the saints, that are intended, the 'new creature,' the 'inward man,' called the Spirit in the Scripture, in opposition to the flesh, if our strengthening this Spirit, be any thing, but the acting of the graces intended thereby in us, I know not what you mean. Especially, in what is or consists their acting

to make 'the Spirit willing proportionably to the means we do receive,' am I to seek: to say, that we receive outward means of God (for so they must be, being distinguished from the Spirit), and thereupon of ourselves do make the Spirit willing, and strengthen him to the performance of God, surely holds out a very sufficient power in spiritual things, inbred in us, and abiding with us, whereof there is not the least line or appearance in the whole book of God, nor in any author urged by Mr. Goodwin to give countenance to his persuasion: neither,

2. Is the sum of all this answer any other but this: 'If we are willing, and will prevent all miscarriages from the weakness of the flesh, we may.' But how we become willing so to do, and what assurance we have, that we shall be so willing, seeing all in us by nature, as to any spiritual duty, is[1] flesh, is not intimated in the least; this is strenuously supposed all along, that to be willing unto spiritual good, in a spiritual manner, is wholly in our own power, and an easy thing it is, no doubt; the plea in hand is, that such is the strength of indwelling sin in the best of the saints, and so easily doth it beset them, that if they have not some promise of God to assure them, that they shall have constant supply of grace from him, and by his power be preserved, it is impossible but that they must be filled with perplexing fears, that they shall not hold out in giving him willing obedience to the end; their will being in an especial manner entangled with the power of sin. It is answered, 'If men be but willing, &c. they need not fear this, or any such issue;' (i. e.) If they do the thing which they fear, and have reasons invincible to fear, that they shall not, they need not fear, but that they shall do it; which is nothing but an absurd begging of the thing in question. Neither is there any thing in the Scripture that will give a pass to this beggar, or shelter him from due correction. The apostle indeed saith, that 'If we walk in the Spirit, we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.' And good reason there is for it, for as he told us, these are contrary to one another, and opposite to one another, and bring forth such divers and contrary fruits in them, in whom they are, that if we walk in the one, we shall not fulfil the lusts of the other. But what assurance have we, that we shall

[1] John iii. 6.

walk in the Spirit, if it be not hence, that God hath promised 'that his Spirit shall never depart from us,' and if we are led by the Spirit we are not under the law; which by the way, letteth us see that the Spirit leadeth us, that is, maketh us willing and strengtheneth us, not we him; but on what account, shall or dare any man promise to himself, that the Spirit will continue so to do, if God hath not promised that he shall so do? or if his leading of us, be only on condition that we be willing to be led, how shall we be in the least ascertained (supposing us in any measure acquainted with the power of indwelling sin), that we shall be alway so willing: let then this pass with what was said before, as nothing to the thing in hand.

3. 'It is answered then (thirdly and lastly), there is no such aptness or proneness unto sin, sins I mean of a disinheriting import in saints, or true believers, as is pretended: but on the contrary, a strong propension or inclination unto righteousness reigneth in them; we heard formerly from the apostle, 1 John iii. 9. 'That he that is born of God cannot sin:' and also from 1 John v. 3. From these suppositions, with many other of like import, it is evident that there is a pregnant, strong, over-powering propension, in all true believers to walk holily, and to live righteously, so that to refrain sinning in the kind intended, is no such great mastery, no such matter of difficulty, unto such men; and that when they are overcome and fall into sin, it is through a mere voluntary neglect; and thus we see all things impartially weighed, and debated to and fro, that the doctrine which supposeth a possibility of the saints' declining, is the doctrine which is according to godliness, and the corrival of it an enemy thereto.'

Ans. We have here an assertion, an inference, and a conclusion; the assertion is, that there is 'no such aptness and proneness to sin in believers, as is intimated;' and 'that because there is such a strong propensity in them to righteousness,' which that they have is proved from sundry places of Scripture; that is, because the Spirit is in believers, the flesh is not in them. Because they have a new man in them, they have not an old; because they have a principle of life, they have not a body of death. That is, where the Spirit lusteth against the flesh, the flesh lusteth not against the

Spirit. We thought the doctrine of Paul, Rom. vii. Gal. v. and in innumerable other places, with the experience of all the saints in the world had lain against this piece of sophistry. It is true, their propension unto righteousness reigneth in them, but it is as true, their propension unto sin, rebelleth in them. Though the land be conquered for Christ, yet the Canaanites will dwell in it; and if the saints leave off but one day, the work of killing, crucifying, and mortifying, they will quickly find an actual rebellion in them, not easy to be suppressed: they have indeed a propension to holiness ruling in them, but also a propension unto sin dwelling in them, so that 'when they would do good, evil is present with them, and the good they would do, they cannot;' but when Mr. Goodwin can prove this consequence, that saints have strong inclinations to righteousness, therefore they have not so to sin, for my part I will forbear for ever disputing with him; if he can beat us, not only from Scripture, but all our spiritual sense and experience, doubtless it is no purpose to contend any longer with him. Hence then,

2. He inferreth, that to abstain from sinning, that is, sinning customarily, and against conscience, so as to endanger the loss of the favour of God, is no such great mastery, no such matter of difficulty to such men. This abstaining from such sins, on the one hand, is the whole course of our gospel obedience, which it seemeth, however it be compared to 'running in a race,' 'striving for masteries,' called 'resisting unto blood,' 'wrestling with principalities and powers,' requiring for its carrying on the 'exceeding greatness of the power of God,' with suitable 'help in time of need from Jesus Christ,' who is sensible of the weight of it, as no small matter, knowing what it is to serve God in temptations, yet is it indeed but a trifling thing, a matter of no great difficulty or mastery: do men watch, pray, contend, fight, wrestle with God and Satan, doth the Lord put forth his power, and the Lord Jesus Christ continually intercede for the preservation of the saints, 'Ad quid perditio hæc?' to what end is all this toil and labour, about a thing of little or no weight? 'Egregiam vero laudem!' We know indeed, the yoke of Christ is easy, and his 'commandment not grievous; that we can do all things through him that enableth us,' but to make gospel obedience, so slight a thing, that it is no great mas-

tery, or matter of no great commendation, to hold out in it to the end, this we were to learn till now, and are as yet slow of heart to receive it.

The conclusion is, 'Ιὸ, Pæan, vicimus :' 'all things unpartially weighed, the case is ours, and godliness exceedingly promoted by the doctrine of the possibility of the saints' defection (Ὅπερ ἔδει δεῖξαι), and the corrival of it an enemy to it :' to prove which not one word in the argument hath been spoken, nor, to free the other from a charge of a direct contrary importance, one word to the purpose; and of Mr. Goodwin's sixth argument for his doctrine of the apostacy of saints, this is the end.

But this is not all he hath to say in this case in hand. Indeed, the main design of his whole thirteenth chapter, consisting of forty-one sections, and about so many pages in his book, and containing all which in an argumentative way he insisteth on in the case in hand, looketh this way; and therefore, having already plucked away one of the main props of that discourse, I shall apply myself to take away those which do remain, that the whole may justly fall to the ground; and therefore shall as briefly as I can, consider the whole of that discourse, containing nine arguments against the perseverance of saints, for the possibility of their total and final defection.

CHAP. XII.

Mr. G.'s entrance and preface to his arguments from the apostacy of the saints considered. The weakness of his first argument: the import of it. Answer to that first argument. Doctrine may pretend to give God the glory of being no accepter of persons, and yet be false: justification by works of that rank and order. Acceptation of persons what, and wherein it consisteth. No place for it with God: contrary to distributive justice. The doctrine of the saints' perseverance charged with rendering God an accepter of persons, unjustly; what it says looking this way. The sum of the charge against it, considered and removed. Mr. G.'s second argument, and the weight by him hung thereon: the original of this argument: by whom somewhat insisted on. The argument itself in his words, proposed: of the use and end of the ministry: whether weakened by the doctrine of perseverance. Entrance into an answer to that argument. The foundation laid of it false, and when: it falsely imposeth on the doctrine of perseverance, sundry things by it disclaimed: the first considered. The iniquity of those impositions farther discovered. The true state of the difference as to this argument, declared. The argument satisfied. The reinforcement of the minor attempted, and considered. The manner of God's operations with, and in, natural and voluntary agents, compared. Efficacy of grace and liberty in man, consistent. An objection to himself framed by Mr. G.; that objection rectified. Perseverance, how absolutely and simply necessary, how not. The removal of the pretended objection farther insisted on by Mr. G. That discourse discussed, and manifested to be weak and sophistical. The consistency of exhortations and promises farther cleared. The manner of the operation of grace, in and upon the wills of men, considered. The inconsistency of exhortations with the efficacy of grace, disputed by Mr. G. That discourse removed, and the use of exhortations farther cleared. Obedience to them twofold, habitual, actual: of the physical operation of grace and means of the word: their compliance and use. How the one and the other affect the will. Inclination to persevere when wrought in believers. Of the manner of God's operation on the wills of men: Mr. G.'s discourse and judgment, considered. Effects follow as to their kind, their next causes. The same act of the will physical and moral upon several accounts: those accounts considered. God, by the real efficacy of the Spirit, produceth in us acts of the will, morally good: that confirmed from Scripture: conclusion from thence. Of the terms, physical, moral, and necessary, and their use in things of the nature under consideration. Moral causes of physical effects. The concurrence of physical and moral causes for producing the same effect: the efficacy of grace and exhortations. Physical and necessary, how distinguished. Moral and not necessary. Confounded by Mr. G. Mr. G.'s farther progress considered. What operation of God on the will of man he allows. All physical operation by him excluded. Mr. G.'s sense of the difference between the working of God and a minister on the will: that

it is but gradual: considered and removed. All working of God on the will by him confined to persuasion: persuasion gives no strength or ability to the person persuaded. All immediate acting of God to good in men, by Mr. G. utterly excluded. Wherein God's persuading men doth consist, according to Mr. G. 1 Cor. iii. 9. *considered. Of the concurrence of diverse agents to the production of the same effect. The sum of the 7th section of chap.* 13. *The will how necessitated, how free. In what sense Mr. G. allows God's persuasions to be irresistible. The dealings of God and men ill-compared. Paul's exhortation to the use of means, where the end was certain,* Acts xxiv. *considered. God deals with men as men, exhorting them, and as corrupted men, assisting them. Of promises of temporal things, whether all conditional. What condition in the promise made to Paul;* Acts xxvii. *Farther of that promise, its infallibility and means of accomplishment. The same considerations farther prosecuted. Of promises of perseverance, and what relations to perform in conjunction. Mr. G.'s opposition hereunto. Promises and protestations in conjunction.* 1 Cor. x. 12, 13. *discussed. An absolute promise of perseverance therein evinced.* Phil. i. 12, 13. *to the same purpose, considered. Mr. G.'s interpretation of that place proposed, removed.* Heb. vi. 4, 5. 9. *to the same purpose, insisted on. Of the consistency of threatenings with the promises of perseverance. Mr. G.'s opposition hereunto, considered and removed. What promises of perseverance are asserted, how absolute and infrustrable. Fear of hell and punishment twofold. The fear intended to be ingenerated by threatenings, not inconsistent with the assurance given by promises. Five considerations about the use of threatenings: the first, &c. Hypocrites how threatened for apostacy: of the end and aim of God in threatenings. Of the proper end and efficacy of threatenings, with reference unto true believers. Fear of hell and punishment, how far a principle of obedience in the saints. Of Noah's fear;* Heb. xi. 7. *Mr. G.'s farther arguings for the efficacy of the fear of hell, unto obedience in the saints; proposed, considered, removed.* 1 John iv. 18. *considered. Of the obedience of saints to their heavenly Father, compared to the obedience of children to their natural parents: Mr. G.'s monstrous conception about this thing. How fear or love, and in what sense, are principles of obedience. That which is done from fear, not done willingly, nor cheerfully. How fear, and what fear, hath torment. Of the nature and use of promises. Close of the answer to this argument.*

It will be needless to use many words unto the discourse of the first section; seeing it will not in the least prejudice our cause in hand, to leave Mr. Goodwin in full possession of all the glory of the rhetoric thereof. For although I cannot close with him in the exposition given of that expression, 1 Tim. vi. 16. 'God inhabiteth light inaccessible,' something, in my weak apprehension, much more glorious and divine being comprised therein, than what it is here turned aside unto; neither am I in the least convinced of the truth Τῆς

ἀποδόσεως of the former discourse, in the close of the whole, asserting a deliverance to be obtained from our thoughts of the doctrine of the defection of the saints, which he intimateth to be, that it is anti-evangelical, tormenting, and bringing souls under bondage, by a narrow and unprejudicate search into it, finding myself every day more and more confirmed in thoughts of that kind concerning it, by my engagement into such an inquiry, which hath been observed in this present discourse, as far as my weakness will permit; yet it being not in the least argumentative, but for the whole frame and intendment of it *commune exordium*, and that which any man of any opinion in the world might make use of, I shall not insist upon it.

His second section containeth his first argument, drawn forth in the defence of his doctrine of the possibility (as he calleth it, but indeed what it is, we have heard) of the defection of believers; of this, I presume he intended no more use but (as a forlorn) to begin a light skirmish with his adversaries, ordering it to retreat to his main body advancing after, or desperately casting it away, to abate the edge of his combatant's weapons, it is so weak and feeble; and, therefore, I shall be very brief in the consideration of it; thus then he proposeth it.

'That doctrine which rendereth God free from the unrighteousness which the Scripture calleth the respecting of persons of men, is a doctrine of perfect consistence with the Scripture, and the truth; the doctrine which teacheth the possibility of the saints' declining, and this unto death, is a doctrine of this import: *ergo*.'

Ans. 1. The first proposition must be supposed universal, or else the whole will quickly be manifested to be unconclusive. If it be only indefinite, and so equivalent (as it lieth) to a particular, the conclusion is from all particulars, and of no force, as Mr. Goodwin well knoweth. Take it universally, and I say it is evidently false, and might easily be disproved by innumerable instances. Not that any error or falsehood, can indeed give God the glory of any one of his attributes; but that they may be fitted and suited for such a service, were not their throats cut, and their mouths stopped, by the lies that are in them, which Mr. Goodwin's doctrine is no less liable to than any other, and not at all exempted

from that condition, by its seeming subserviency unto God's *aprosopolepsia*. Doth not the doctrine of justification by works, even in the most rigid sense of it, according to the tenor of the old covenant, absolutely render God free from the unrighteousness of accepting of persons? and yet for all that, it hath not one jot the more of truth in it, nor is it the less anti-evangelical. This foundation then being removed, whatever is built upon it *mole ruit suâ*. Neither is it in any measure restored, or laid anew, by the reason of it given by Mr. G. viz. 'That the Scripture affirmeth in sundry places that God is no accepter of persons:' for he that shall hence conclude, that whatever doctrine affirmeth, directly, or by consequence, that God is no accepter of persons, whatever other abomination it is evidently teeming withal, is yet true, and according to the mind of God, shall have leave, notwithstanding the antiquated statute of our university against it, to go and read logic at Stamford. On this account, do but provide that a doctrine be not guilty of any one crime, and you may conclude that it is guilty of none. For instance, that doctrine which impeacheth not the omnipresence of the Deity, is true and according to the Scripture, for the Scripture aboundeth with clear testimonies of the presence of God in all places. Now the doctrine of the ubiquity of the human nature of Christ, doth no way impeach the omnipresence of the Deity; therefore it is true and according to Scripture.

I might supersede all farther considerations of this argument, having rendered it altogether useless, and unserviceable in this warfare, by breaking its right leg, or rather crutch, whereon it leaned: but something also may be added to the minor, because of its reflection in the close of its proof upon the doctrine we maintain, intimating an inconsistency of it, with that excellency of God spoken of; namely, that he is no accepter of persons.

'*Prosopolepsia*, or accepting of persons, is an evil in judgment, when he who is to determine in causes of righteousness, hath respect to personal things, that concern not the merit of the cause in hand, and judgeth accordingly.' This properly can have no place in God, as to any bestowing of free grace, mercy, or pardon; there is room made for it, only when the things that are bestowed, or wrought, by it,

are such, as in justice are due; it being an iniquity solely and directly opposed to distributive justice,[a] that rendereth to every one according to what is righteous and due. That with God there be no accepting of persons there is no more required, but this, that he appoint and determine equal punishments to equal faults, and give equal rewards to equal deservings. If he will dispose of his pardoning mercy, and free grace to some in Christ not to others, who shall say unto him what dost thou? May he not do what he will with his own? So he giveth a penny to him that laboureth all day, he may give a penny also to him that worketh but one hour. Now suppose that Mr. G.'s doctrine render God free from this (or rather chargeth him not with it), yet if withal it calleth his truth, righteousness, faithfulness, oath, and immutability into question, shall it pass for a truth, or be embraced ever the sooner?

But the sting of this argument lieth in the tail, or close of it, in the reflection insisted on, upon the common doctrine of perseverance as it is called: viz. that it teacheth God to be an accepter of persons: this is Mr. Goodwin's way of arguing all along; when at any time he hath proposed a proof of the doctrine he goeth about to establish, finding that as something heavy work to lie upon his hand, and not much to be said in the case, he instantly turneth about and falleth upon his adversaries, in declaiming against whom, he hath a rich and overflowing vein. There is scarce any one of his arguments, in the pursuit and improvement whereof, one fourth part of it is spoken to that head, wherein he is engaged.

But wherein is the common doctrine of perseverance guilty of this great crime? It teacheth, that he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned. It teacheth, that God hath allotted equal punishments to equal transgressions, and appointed equal rewards to equal ways of obedience. That the wages of every sin is death, and that every sinner must die, unless it be those, concerning whom God himself saith,[b] 'Deliver them, I have found a ransom:' that he is alike displeased with sin in whomsoever it is, and that in a peculiar and eminent manner when it is found in his own. Indeed, if this be to

[a] Exod. xxiii. 2, 3. 6—9. Job. xxxi. 34. [b] Job. xxxiii. 24.

impute acceptation of persons to God, to say, 'that he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth;' that is, tender to his own, as a Father to his only child that serveth him, and will recover them (being faithful in his promises) from their sins, and heal their backslidings, though he suffer others to lie wallowing in their rebellions, and pollutions all their days; that he will not give pardon to any sinner, but upon faith and repentance, but will give faith and repentance to those whom he hath chosen, and given unto Jesus Christ, to be saved: if this, I say, be acceptance of persons, our doctrine owneth the imputation of ascribing it to God, and glorieth in it: we being ascertained that God taketh all this to himself, clearly, and plentifully in the word of truth.

The sum of what our author gives in, to make good his charge upon the common doctrine of perseverance is, That it affirmeth, 'that though saints and believers fall into the same sins of adultery and idolatry, and the like, with other men, yet they are not dealt withal as other men, but continued in love and favour of God.' To wave the consideration of the false impositions (by the way) on the doctrine opposed (as that is that it teacheth the saints to fall into, and to continue in them to the significancy of that expression, 'never so long' under abominations), and to join issue upon the whole of the matter, I say,

1. That in and with this doctrine, and in perfect harmony and consistency therewith, we maintain, that[c] the judgment of God is the same in respect of every sin in whomsoever it is, and that he that doth it on that account, is worthy of death; and,

2. That the sentence of the law, is the same towards all, cursing[d] every one that continueth not in all things written in the book thereof, to do them.

3. That in and under the gospel, wherein a remedy is provided in reference to the rigour and severity of both the former apprehensions, yet the judge of all, dealeth with all men equally, accoording to the tenor of it, 'He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned;' men in the same condition, shall have the same recompense of reward: but you will say, do not the same

[c] Rom. i. 32. [d] Deut. xxvii. 26.

sins, put men into the same condition, and deserve the same punishment in one as in another?

Ans. 1. They do deserve the same punishment: God is equally provoked, and had not Christ answered for the sins of believers, they could not, they should not, have escaped the wrath due to them. 2. That the same sins do not argue men always under the gospel, to be in the same condition, as shall be afterward fully manifested: for, (1.) They do not find them in the same state: some are in a state of death and sin, others of life and grace, being translated from the one to the other, having a title to the promise of mercy in Christ. (2.) And chiefly, as there is a twofold justification of the person and of the fact, and the one may be without the other, so there is a twofold condemnation of disapprobation of the fact, and of the person; as to the particular disapprobation of God in respect of any sinful act, it is the same in reference unto all persons, believers and unbelievers: as to their persons, there are in the gospel other ingredients to the judgment of them, beside particular facts, or acts, in answer to the law or the rule of righteousness, viz. faith and repentance, which alter the case of the person, even before the judgment-seat of God: to suppose the saints to fall into the same sins with other men, in the same manner, and to continue in them, without faith and repentance, is to beg the thing in question. Suppose them to have (what we affirm God hath promised) those conditions of evangelical mercy, and Mr. Goodwin himself, will grant it no acceptance of persons, to deal otherwise with them, than with others who have committed like sins with them, in whom those conditions are not wrought or found; that is, 'he that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned.' This is all we say in this thing: but of the difference between believers and unbelievers in their sinning, we shall speak afterward at large, to the full removal of this and another objection. For the present this shall suffice, though believers fall, or may fall into the same sins with other men, yet they fall not into them in the same manner with them, and they have a relief provided, to prevent the deadly malignity of sin, which those who believe not, have no interest in, nor right unto.

Mr. Goodwin's second argument, is that which of all

others in this case, he seemeth to lay most weight upon, and which he pursueth at large in seventeen pages, and as many sections, treating in it concerning the ministry of the gospel, and the usefulness of the exhortations, threatenings, and promises thereof. For an entrance into the consideration of it, I must needs say, 'Non venit ex pharetris ista sagitta tuis.' For besides, that Mr. Goodwin hath taken very little pains in the improvement of it (considering how it was provided to his hand by the remonstrants at the synod of Dort, and that which he hath done farther, consisting in a mere useless and needless stuffing of it, with sundry notions taken out of their first argument and fifth 'De modo conversionis' of the manner of the Spirit's operation in and upon the soul, in its first conversion to God), it was the old song of the Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians, in their dealing with Austin, Fulgentius, Hilarius, Prosper, by them at large confuted, renewed by Castalio and Erasmus against Luther, after it had been sifted and rejected by the more learned schoolmen in former ages. Whatever it be, and however it is now come to hand, being taught to speak our language, and that in the best fashion, the consideration of it must not be declined. And thus it is proposed:

'If the common doctrine of perseverance, rendereth the ministry of the gospel, so far as it concerneth the perseverance of the saints, vain, impertinent, and void, then is it not a doctrine of God, but of men, and consequently that which opposeth it is the truth: but certain it is, that the said doctrine, is of this unchristian tendency and import; *ergo*.' The first part of the consequent of the major is granted. The work of the ministry, being for the edification of the body of Christ, and the perfecting of the saints, (Eph. iv. 12, 13.) that which frustrateth the end whereunto of Christ himself it is designed, can be no truth of his. Of the farther inference, that the doctrine which opposeth it, or is set up in opposition to it, is the truth, more will be spoken afterward. For the present I cannot but insist upon the former observation. That notwithstanding, Mr. Goodwin's pretence of proving and arguing for the doctrine he maintains, yet upon the matter, he hath not any thing to say, in the carrying on of that design, but instantly falls to his old work of raising objections, in their very setting up prepared to be

cast down (for the most part), which with all his might he laboured to remove.

The stress of the whole (as far as we are concerned in it) lieth on the minor, which is thus farther attempted to be made good: the minor proposition is demonstrated thus: 'The doctrine which rendereth the labour and faithfulness of a minister in pressing such exhortations, threatenings, and promises, which tend to the preservation of the saints, in faith and holiness to the end, useless, rendereth the ministry of the gospel, as far as it concerneth the encouragement or enabling of the saints to persevere, needless and vain: but guilty of such a tendency as this, is the commonly received doctrine of perseverance: *ergo.*'

Ans. This labour might have been saved, and both these syllogisms very easily reduced to one: but then another seeming argument (as we shall find afterward) insisted on, would have been prevented. Our trade in such cases as this is by weight, and not by number: the minor then, is still to be confirmed; which he laboureth thus to do:

'The common doctrine of perseverance, requireth and commandeth all saints or believers to be fully persuaded, and this with the greatest and most indubitable certainty of faith, that there is an absolute and utter impossibility, either of a total, or a final, defection of their faith: that though they should fall into ten thousand enormous and most abominable sins, and lie wallowing in them, like a swine in the mire, yet they should remain all the while in an estate of grace, and that God will, by a strong hand of irresistible grace, bring them off from their sins by repentance, before they die: but the doctrine which requireth and commandeth all this, and much more of like import, to be confidently believed by true believers, rendereth the pressing of all exhortations, threatenings, promises upon them in order to prevail with them, or to make them carefully to persevere, bootless and unnecessary: *ergo.*'

Ans. 1. What weight Mr. Goodwin (with all those with whom as to his undertaking under consideration he is in fellowship) doth lay upon this argument, is known to all. The whole foundation of what is afterward at large insisted on, for the establishment of it, being laid upon the proof of the minor proposition formerly denied, here laid down. It will

easily be granted, that it was incumbent on him to make sure work here, and not to leave any thing liable to any just exception. An error or a mistake in the foundation, is not easily recoverable; all that is afterward heaped up, beareth itself on a supposition of the truth of what is here delivered. If this fail in the least, we may spare our labour, as to any farther consideration of what followeth. Now the main of the proof here insisted on, lieth, in the declaration of that which he calleth, the common doctrine of perseverance, and concerning this, he informeth his reader:

1. 'That it commandeth all saints to be fully persuaded, and that with the greatest and most indubitable certainty of faith, that there is an absolute and utter impossibility either of a total, or final defection of their faith.'

Ans. 1. What is the intendment of these aggravating expressions of 'fully persuaded, greatest and most indubitable certainty of faith,' I know not. Will it please you, if it should require them to be persuaded, but not fully persuaded, believe it, but with little and dubitable certainty of faith, or uncertainty rather? Full persuasion, greatest certainty, without doubting or staggering, are all of their perfections of faith, and of the saints in believing: which without doubt they are, in all that they are to believe, to press after: so that all this is no more, but that this doctrine requireth men to believe what it affirmeth God to have promised. It requireth men to mix the promises of God with faith, *crimen in auditum.* But though the manner of believing which it requireth, be not blamable, yet the thing which it proposeth to be believed is false. What is that? That there is an absolute or utter impossibility either of a total or final defection of the faith of true believers. Its requiring this to be believed is the bottom, and also corner-stone, of Mr. Goodwin's ensuing argument: if it doth not do this, he hath nothing in this place to say to it. Let him then produce any one that ever wrote in the defence of it, that hath in terms, or by just consequence, delivered any such thing, and on *herbam;* there shall be an end of this dispute. I presume Mr. Goodwin knoweth what is meant by an absolute and utter impossibility. An absolute repugnancy unto being, in the nature of the things themselves concerning which any affirmation is, and not any external or foreign considera-

to an absolute and utter impossi-
affirm, that in the nature of the
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me persons constantly affirmed to
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erted, or only that which is so upon
purpose of God, &c. There was no
that the bones of Christ should not
in themselves as liable to be broken
ed; yet in respect of the event, it was
uld be so. I cannot well imagine that
fully persuaded with the greatest and
certainty that a persuasion in things of
it, that the common doctrine of perseve-
quire saints to believe, that there is an ab-
lity of their defection, but only that God hath
reserve them from that which in themselves,
of any thing in them, they are obnoxious unto,
e use of the means, suited and appointed by
rrying on of that work and compassing of the
ed. But yet it pleaseth him here to make show
rary apprehension, and to shew his confidence
e aggravates it, with this annexed supposition and
doth so,' saith he, 'though they should fall into
usand enormous and most abominable sins, and lie
ving in them like swine in the mire, yet that they shall
n all the while in an estate of grace.'

Truly this is such an enormous and an abominable that I cannot but admire how any sober and ra- n, durst venture upon the owning of it; the ques-

tion now is, what faith the doctrine insisted on ingenerates in particular persons, that should enervate and make void the exhortations, &c. of the ministry? Now though the doctrine should teach this indefinitely, that though men did sin so and so, as is here expressed, yet they should be kept in a state of grace as is mentioned (which yet is loudly and palpably false, as hath been declared), yet that it doth require particular men to believe for themselves, and in reference to the guidance of their own ways, that they may 'lie and wallow in their sin like swine in the mire, and yet continue in a state of grace and acceptation with God,' is so notoriously contrary to the whole tenor of the doctrine, the genius and nature of it, with all the arguments whereby it is asserted and maintained, that if conscience had but in the least been advised withal in this contest, this charge had been without doubt omitted: all that is produced for the confirmation of this strange imposition on the persuasion under consideration, is his own testimony that makes the charge, 'that it is the known voice of the common doctrine of perseverance,' and that being said is laid as a foundation of all that follows. The whole discourse still relating to a supposition that this is the doctrine which it opposeth, from the very next words to the end. Nor is there the least farther attempt for the confirmation of this grand assertion; but is this the known voice of our doctrine of perseverance? Whoever heard it but Mr. G. and men of the like prejudicate spirits against the truth? The worst that can be charged with looking this way, is its asserting the promised efficacy of the grace of God, for the preserving of believers by the use of means, from such wallowing in abominable sins, as is supposed that it affirms they may be exposed unto. In brief, it says not,

First, That all believers are certain of their perseverance; nor,

Secondly, That any one can be certain of it upon such supposals as are here mentioned: such a persuasion would not be from him that calls them; nor,

Thirdly, That the end can be obtained without the use of means, though by them it shall certainly be so; but,

Fourthly, That all the hope of their perseverance, is built on the promises of God, to preserve them by and in the use

that in truth there is no need of any farther
ue removing of the argument insisted on, but
mer of the doctrine by it opposed, if it be that
expressed.
ed which Mr. Goodwin hath to dispute against,
al fairly and candidly in the carrying on of his
is: 'That the certainty of an end to be obtained
ited thereunto, doth not enervate nor render
of those means, appointed for the accomplish-
end.' The perseverance of the saints is the
roposed to be accomplished: that this shall be
fected and brought about, according to the pro-
d for the affecting of it, God hath appointed the
er debate, to be managed by the ministry of the
at the promise of God concerning the saints, per-
to be wrought and effected, as by others so by
ns in their kind, doth not invalidate or render use-
vain the use of those means, but indeed establishes
d ascribes to them their proper efficacy, is that which
octrine is asserted, and which Mr. Goodwin ought
disproved, if he would have acquitted himself as a
onist in this cause; the promise, we say, that He-
d of the continuance of his life, did not make use-
called for, the 'plaister of figs' that was appointed
aling of his sore.
ht then, as I said, save myself the labour of farther
, for the casting down of this fabric, built on the
oundations of falsehood and mistake. But because
ing may fall in of that which followeth, more indeed
purpose than an orderly pursuit of these assertions
wn in the entrance would require, that may more di-
rise up against the cause in whose defence I am en-
I shall consider the whole ensuing discourse, which
t doubt will administer farther occasion for the illus-
or confirmation of the truth in hand. He proceeds

he reason of the minor is, because a certain knowledge
suasion, that God will by an irresistible hand of
preserve a man, in the state of grace, how desperately

[a] Isa. xxxviii. 5. 21.

careless, negligent, or wicked, soever he shall be, clearly dissolves the usefulness and necessity of all other means whatsoever, in referenee to this end. If I know certainly that the corn which I have sown in my field will, whether I wake or sleep, grow and prosper, would it not be a very impertinent address, for any man to come to me, and admonish me in a serious and grave manner, to take heed I sleep not, but keep myself waking lest my corn should not grow or prosper, or that it may grow and prosper; if my corn grows, thrives, and prospers, by the irresistible hand of God, by the course of a natural and standing providence, my watchfulness, in order to a procurement of these things, is absolutely vain,' &c.

Ans. That this is not the doctrine which Mr. Goodwin hath undertaken to oppose, hath been more than once already declared; that he is not able with any colour of reason to oppose it, unless he first impose his own false and vain inferences upon it, and them upon his reader, for the doctrine itself from his constant course of proceeding against it, is also evident; what advantage this is like in the close, to prove to his cause in the judgment of considerate men, the event will discover: the assertion of the stability of the promises of God in Jesus Christ given to believers, concerning his effectual preserving them to the end, from such sins as are absolutely inconsistent with his grace and favour according to the tenor of the new covenant, or such continuance in any sin as is of the same importance, by his Spirit and grace, in the use of means, doth no way tend to the begetting in any a certain knowledge, assurance, and persuasion, that God will continue them in a state of grace, how 'desperately careless or wicked soever they shall be.'

What is intended by the frequent repetition of this gross sophistry, or what success with the intelligent Christian ponderers of things he can hope for thereby, I am not able to guess; neither is any improvement in the least given to what the intendment of this argument is, so far as the common doctrine of perseverance is concerned therein, from the comparison ensuing instituted between the growth of corn, and the walking of believers in obedience before God; for notwithstanding the identity in respect of the comparison

te,' which indeed is proper to
ence between the growing of
d the moral actings of an in-
atever operations of God are
r, yet they are suited to their
; God carries on the growth
nd necessary causes, but his
y such ways and means, as
rly; that is, preserving them
n to be such agents. As then
by the shining of his sun,
he causeth believers to per-
tions, promises, and threat-
eans, as are suited to such
of this discourse, lies in an
ectual (or as they are called
preservation of believers in
hath undertaken over and
their nature, and render them
s, fit to be wrought upon by
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and natural principles of all
; a conceit as gross and ridi-
uctive to all the efficacy of the
st of this section as far as it con-
ming this way and that, that an as-
obtained by the use of means, ren-
gether useless; which when he proves,
be nearer to an issue, than otherwise
to hope that it is or will be, to his ad-

g the farther confirmation of his argu-
pon the removal of a plea insisted on, to
of the doctrine opposed, and vindication of
e wherewith here by him it is charged; this
s, that the exhortations, comminations, and
oken of, are means appointed of God for the
g and effecting of the perseverance of the
he hath made simply and absolutely necessary
e. 'This,' he saith, 'hath neither any logical
cal virtue in it, for the purpose for which it is

produced; but is a notion irrelative to the business, the accommodation whereof it pretends.'

Ans. It may be so; suffer you to frame the objection, and who will doubt of your abilities of giving an answer; but who, I pray, says that God by his decree, hath made the perseverance of the saints simply and absolutely necessary; that it is certain in respect of the event, from the decree of God, we grant; and do we thereby overthrow the means whereby it is to be accomplished? Yea, we establish them; we are of the mind that God hath purposed, and thereupon promised, the accomplishment of many things (as the selling of Joseph into Egypt, the bringing of the children of Israel from thence, and the like), which yet were to be carried on to their accomplishment, and brought about through innumerable contingencies, by the free, rational, deliberative actings of men; if by 'simply and absolutely necessary,' you intend that the thing decreed is to be wrought of men, simply and absolutely, necessarily by their operations, as to the manner of them, we simply and absolutely deny any such decree; if by those expressions you improperly intend only the certainty of the event, or accomplishment of the thing decreed with respect to the means appointed and fitted thereunto, we say this establisheth those means, neither have they the nature of means to an end from any reason whatever, but as so appointed of God thereunto. But he proceeds in the proof of his former assertion, and says,

'First, That the exhortations whereby the saints are exhorted to perseverance, are no means by which the promises of perseverance made, as our adversaries suppose, to them are accomplished or effected, is thus clearly evinced: whatsoever is a means for the bringing of any thing to pass, ought not to contain any thing in it, repugnant or contrary unto that which is intended to be brought to pass by it, for means ought to be subordinate to their ends, not repugnant; but the Scripture exhortations unto perseverance, contain that which is repugnant to the promises of perseverance, if supposed such as our adversaries suppose them to be, therefore they can by no means effect those promises; the minor is evident by the light of this consideration; such exhortations as these to the saints: Take heed lest at any time there be an evil heart of unbelief in you; lest you be hardened

of sin; lest you fall from grace,
ace of God in vain; lest you fall
stness;—in their native and proper
ger, and serve to raise a fear in men,
rted, should come upon them; where-
these made unto the same persons, and
ally as is supposed, that there shall never
belief in you; that they shall never be hard-
ne deceitfulness of sin; that they shall never
m the grace of God; exclude all danger or pos-
lling away, and tend directly to prevent or ex-
fear in men of any such danger; therefore, such
ns are in their nature and genuine import, con-
such promises in theirs, and consequently can be
s of bringing them to pass.'

1. Exhortations are not so properly the means
by the promises are accomplished, as the means where-
things mentioned in the promises are wrought; God,
d through them, stirring up those graces, which he
ises to work, continue, and to increase in his saints.

'Exhortations divine,' must be so apprehended as to
bservient to an end, in respect of God foreknown and
rmined; it is true, we exhort men (or may) to those things
whose event we are wholly uncertain; but to God this
nnot be ascribed: he doth foreknow, and hath fore-de-
rmined the end and issue that every one of his exhorta-
ions shall have; and therefore such a nature and no other
is to be ascribed to them, as is consistent with, and subser-
vient to, a determined end.

3. To the confirmation of his minor proposition, the an-
wer is easy from the consideration; first, of the end of the
xhortations insisted on unto perseverance; and then of the
promises of perseverance themselves, which are no way in-
nsistent therewith. For the first, I say, those exhorta-
ns, 'take heed lest there be in you an evil heart of unbe-
f,' and the like, are not given to ingenerate a fear of falling
y (which is a thing in itself evil and opposite unto that
dfastness of faith, and full assurance, which we should
unto, so far is it from any act of faithful obedience,
od should aim to work in the hearts of his, and apply
thereunto), but only to beget a holy care and dili-

gence in them to whom they are made or given for the using of the means appointed of God, for the avoiding of the evil threatened to follow upon a neglect of them; which directly falls in and sweetly conspires with the end and use of the promises of perseverance by us urged and insisted upon. Nothing is imported by them, but only the connexion that is between the things mentioned in them; as unbelief, and rejection from God. This God aims at in those exhortations, in their particular respect unto believers, that by them they may be stirred up to the use of those means, which he hath appointed for them, to be by them preserved in the grace and mercy, which he hath infallibly promised to continue to them.

And, 4. The end of the promises of perseverance on which we have insisted, being their mixing with faith to establish the souls of the saints, in believing the kindness and faithfulness of God in his covenant in Jesus Christ, they do not take away nor prevent all danger of perishing, and so consequently not that fear in any measure which stirs them up so to the use of means that they may not perish, but only are effectual for their deliverance out of those dangers, which are apt and able of themselves to destroy them: as our Saviour himself prays for them. John xvii. 15. 'I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world' (where, whilst they are, they will be sure to meet with dangers and perplexities enough), 'but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil,' wherewith they must reckon to be exercised. There is not then the least contrariety or diverse aspect, between the assurance of faith about the end, which the promises lead unto, and the care and godly fear about the means instituted and appointed with respect to the end, which exhortations do beget, and will notwithstanding those promises

5. The greatest inconsistency that can be imagined, between exhortations and promises, as by us explained, is no more than this, that in one place God promiseth that unto us is the grace, which in another he requires of us as our duty. Between which two, whoever feigns an opposition, he [illegible] our to set the covenant of grace, as to us [illegible] clared, at variance with itself.

[illegible] uing discourse unto sect 12. drawing deep

upon another controversy (viz. 'the manner of the operation of grace'), and being for the most part borrowed from what is delivered on that head in the[f] Arminian writings, might be passed over, as not of any necessary consideration in this place. What we assign to the exhortations of the word, and their consistency with whatever else we teach of the saints' perseverance, being already heard, this argument is at its proper issue. But the task undertaken is not to be waved or avoided, I shall therefore proceed to the discussion of it. Thus then he goes on:

'If,' saith he, 'such exhortations as we speak of, be a means to effect the perseverance, which our adversaries suppose to be promised in the saints, then must the act of perseverance in the saints, necessarily depend upon them; so as that it cannot nor will not be effected without them, i. e. without the saints submitting themselves to them. But persevering upon these terms clearly supposeth a possibility of non-persevering, for whatsoever dependeth upon a mutable condition, and which possibly may not be performed, may be also possible never to come to pass.'

Ans. 1. Exhortations are improperly said to be a means to 'effect perseverance:' we say only that they are means to stir up, quicken, and increase those graces in the exercise whereof the saints, according to the purpose and promise of God, do persevere.

2. The perseverance of the saints doth consist in the abiding and continuance of those graces in them, which those exhortations do so stir up, and farther or increase. And in that regard there is a connexion between the perseverance of the saints, and the exhortations mentioned: yea, a dependance of the one on the other. But this dependance ariseth not from the nature of the things themselves, whence such a certainty as is asserted would not arise, but from the purpose and appointment of God that they should be effectual to that end: and therefore,

3. A perseverance on these terms supposeth a possibility of non-persevering, if you regard only the nature of the things themselves, and set aside all consideration of the purpose and promises of God concerning the end, which is to beg the thing in hand; yea, the promise of God extends itself

[f] Acta Synodal.

to the certain accomplishment of the saints' submission to those exhortations; so that the end aimed at doth not depend on a mutable condition (if I understand any thing of that expression, so unsuited to the business in hand), the performance of the condition (or the yielding of such obedience as is required to the essence of the saints' perseverance) being certain also from the promises of God.

His fifth section is as followeth, 'If it be said, that the said exhortations are means of the saints' persevering in this respect, because God by his Spirit irresistibly and infrustrably draws and persuades the saints to obey these exhortations, as means of their persevering: I answer, It cannot be proved that God doth draw or persuade his saints upon any such terms to obey these exhortations, nay, frequent experience sheweth, and our adversaries' doctrine frequently mentioned, expressly granteth that the saints many times are so far from obeying these exhortations, that they walk for a long time in full opposition to them, as in security, looseness, vile practices: nor have they yet proved, nor (I believe) ever will prove but that they may walk, yea and that many have thus walked, I mean in full opposition to the said exhortations to their dying day. Secondly, If God by his Spirit irresistibly draws his saints to obey the exhortations we speak of, he thus draweth them either by such a force or power immediately acted upon their wills by which they are made willing to obey them; or else he maketh use of the said exhortations so to work or affect their wills, that they become willing accordingly: if the former be asserted; Then first, the said exhortations are no means whereby the perseverance of the saints is effected, but God irresistibly by his Spirit; for if the will be thus immediately affected by God after such a manner, and wrought to such a bent and inclination, as that it cannot but obey the said exhortations, or do the things which the said exhortations require, then would it have done the same things whether there had been any such exhortations in being or no, and consequently these exhortations could have no manner of efficiency about their perseverance; for the will, according to the common saying, is of itself a blind faculty, and follows its own predominant bent and inclination, without taking knowledge whether the ways and actions towards which it stands bent,

be commanded or exhorted unto by God or no: 2. If the will of a saint be immediately so affected by God, that it stands inclined and bent to do the things which are proper to cause them to persevere; then is this bent and inclination wrought in the will of such a person, after his being a saint, and consequently is not essential to him as a saint, but merely accidental and adventitious: and if so, then is there no inclination or bent in the will of a saint, as such, or from his first being a saint to persevere, or to do the things which accompany perseverance, but they come to be wrought in him afterward; which how consistent it is with the principles either of reason or religion, or their own, I am content that my adversaries themselves should judge. 3. If God doth immediately and irresistibly incline, or move the wills of the saints to do the things which accompany perseverance, the said exhortations can be no means of effecting this perseverance; for the will being physically and irresistibly acted and drawn by God, to do such and such things, needeth no addition of moral means, such as exhortations are (if they be any) in order hereunto; what a man is necessitated to, he needeth no farther help or means to do it. 4. The things which accompany perseverance, impart a continuance in faith and love to the end; if then the wills of the saints be immediately and irresistibly moved by God thus to continue, I mean in faith and love to the end, what place is there for exhortations to come in with their efficiency towards that perseverance? Need they be exhorted to continue in faith and love, or to persevere after the end? Thus then we clearly see, that the former of the two consequents mentioned cannot stand; God doth not by his Spirit irresistibly draw or move the wills of the saints, to do the things which are necessary for the procuring their perseverance immediately, or without the instrumental interposure of the said exhortations.'

Ans. First, the intendment of this, as also of some following sections, is to prove and manifest, that the use of exhortations cannot consist with the efficacy of internal grace, and the work of the Spirit in producing and effecting those graces in us, which in those exhortations we are provoked and stirred up unto. A very sad undertaking, truly, to my apprehension, and for which the church of God will scarce ever return thanks to them that shall engage in it; he was

of another mind, who cried 'Da Domine quod jubes, et jube quod vis;' yea, and the Holy Ghost hath in innumerable places of Scripture expressed himself of another mind, promising to work effectually in us, what he requires earnestly of us; by the one manifesting the efficacy of his grace, by the other the exigency of the duty which is incumbent upon us. Nay, never any saint of God once prayed in his life, seeking any thing at the hand of God, but was of another mind, if he understood his own supplications. To what is here urged against this catholic faith of believers, I say,

That exhortations are the means of perseverance, inasmuch as by them in their place and kind, and with them, the Spirit of God effectually works this perseverance or the matter of it in the saints. Those cloudy expressions of 'irresistibly and unfrustrably,' we own no farther than as they denote the certainty of the event, and not the manner of the Spirit's operation, which also they do very unhandsomely. We leave out then in the proposal of our judgment about the use of exhortations, which Mr. Goodwin opposeth, those terms, and add in their room, 'by and by with those exhortations,' which he omits.

He saith then, 'This cannot be proved, because the saints live, and die oftentimes, in opposition and disobedience unto these exhortations.'

But obedience is twofold: First, As to the general frame of the heart, obedience in the habit; and so it is false that the saints live at any time in an ordinary course, much less die in opposition to those exhortations; the law of God being written in their hearts, and they delighting in it in their inward man, they abide therein; the fruit of obedience for the most part being brought forth by them; and this sufficeth as to their perseverance.

Secondly, It regardeth particular acts of obedience, and in respect of them we all say, that yet they all sin ('Optimus ille est, qui minimis urgetur'), but this prejudiceth not their perseverance, nor the general end of the exhortations afforded them for that purpose.

But he adds, secondly, 'If God by his Spirit irresistibly draws his saints to persevere, *ut supra*.'

But this is sorry sophistry, which may be felt, as they say, through a pair of mittins: for,

First, Who says that God works by force immediately

upon the wills of men? Or who makes force and power to be terms equivalent? Or that God cannot put forth the 'exceeding greatness of his power in them that believe,' but he must force or compel their wills: or that he cannot 'work in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure,' immediately working in and with our wills, but he must so force them.

Secondly, Whence ariseth the disjunctive force of this argument? Either by immediate actings upon their wills, or he makes use of those exhortations? As though the one way were exclusive of the other, and that the Scripture did not abundantly and plentifully ascribe both these unto God; both that he exhorts us to know him, love him, believe in him, and gives us an understanding, and a heart so to do; working faith and love in us, by the exceeding efficacy of his power and Spirit: I say then, that God works immediately by his Spirit, in and on the wills of his saints: that is, he puts forth a real physical power that is not contained in those exhortations, though he doth it by, and in, and with them: the impotency that is in us to do good, is not amiss termed *ethico-physica;* both natural and moral; and the applications of God to the soul in their doing good, are both really and physically efficient, and moral also; the one consisting in the efficacy of his Spirit, the other lying in the exhortations of the word; yet so as that the efficacy of the Spirit is exerted by, and with the moral efficacy of the word; his works being but grace or the law in the heart, the word being the law written, so that all the ensuing reasonings are bottomed upon things *male divisa,* that stand in a sweet harmony and compliance with each other.

But Mr. Goodwin tells you 'that if God work by his Spirit and his grace immediately on the wills of men, to cause them to persevere, then are exhortations no means of their perseverance.'

Why so, I pray? It seems we must have no internal effectual grace from God, or no outward exhortations of the word; but he tells you it must be so, because, if the will be physically and irresistibly acted and drawn by God, to do such and such things, it needeth no addition of moral means, such are exhortations thereunto: that is, if the will be effectually inclined to the ways of God, by his grace, there is then no need of the exhortations of the word. But yet,

First, the Spirit of God though he have an immediate efficacy of his own, by and with those exhortations, yet by those exhortations he also inclines the will; and as he works on the will as corrupt and impotent, by his grace, so he works on the will (as the will, or as such a faculty is apt to be wrought upon by a mediation of the understanding) by exhortations.

Secondly, To say obedience would have been produced and wrought had there been no exhortations, is not required of us, what efficacy soever we ascribe to grace, unless we also deny exhortations to be appointed of God, and to be used by the Spirit of God, for the producing of that obedience. Neither,

Thirdly, Doth God work upon the will as a distinct faculty alone of itself, without suiting his operations to the other faculties of the soul? nor is grace to be wrought or carried on in us, merely as we have wills, but as we have understandings also, whereby the exhortations he is pleased to use, may be conveyed to the will and affect it in their kind; in a word, this is but repeating what was said before; 'if there be any effectual grace, there is no use of exhortations; if exhortations be the means of continuing or increasing grace, what need the efficacy of grace or immediate actings of the Spirit, working in us 'to will and to do of God's good pleasure?' What validity there is in these inferences, will be easily discerned; God worketh grace in men, as men, and as men impotent and corrupted by sin; as men, he works upon them by means suited to their rational being, by precepts and exhortations: but as men impotent and corrupt by sin, they stand in need of his effectual power, to work that in them, which he requireth of them: of the terms wherewith his arguing in this case is clouded and darkened, enough hath been remarked already.

His second argument to this purpose, viz. 'That the inclination of the will to good, and to persevere in a saint, must be after his being made a saint;' is as weak and no less sophistical than the former; that inclination is radically wrought in every believer at his conversion, the Spirit being bestowed on him, which shall abide with him for ever, and the seed of God laid in his heart that shall remain, and never utterly fail, with an habitual inclination to the exercise

of all those graces wherein their persevering doth consist. Actually this is wrought in them according to the particular duties and actings of grace, that are required of them, which they are carried forth unto, by the daily influence of life, power, and grace, which they receive from Christ their head, without whom they can do nothing.

Neither is the third exception of any more validity, being only a repetition of what was spoken before, rendered something more impedite, dark, and intricate, by the terms of 'physically, irresistibly,' and 'necessitated,' which how far, and wherein, we do allow, hath been frequently declared. The sum of what is spoken amounts to this: 'God's real work in and upon the soul by his Spirit, and grace, is inconsistent with the exhortations to obedience:' which we have before disproved, and do reject it as an assertion destructive to all the efficacy of the grace of God, and the whole work of it, upon the souls of men.

What his fourth argument also is, but a repetition of the same things before crudely asserted in other terms, let them apprehend that can; 'if God work faith and love, in the hearts of his saints, and support them in them to the end, what place is left for exhortations?' I say their own proper place, the place of means; of means appointed by God to stir up his to perseverance, and which himself makes by his Spirit, and the immediate efficacy thereof, effectual to that endand purpose; and I know no use of that query, 'Are exhortations effectual to persuade men to persevere after the end?' being built only on his false hypothesis, and begging of the thing in question, viz. That if God work faith and love, and continuance of them in our hearts effectually by his grace, there is no need, no use of exhortations, though God so work them, by and with those exhortations; and this is his first attempt, upon the first member of the division made by himself, wherein what success he hath obtained is left to the judgment of the reader; and, but that I shall not, having now the part of one that answers incumbent on me, turn aside unto the proof of things denied, I should easily confirm what hath been given in for the removal of his objections, from the testimony of God, by innumerable places of Scripture.

He proceeds then, sect. 6. and says, 'Secondly, neither can

the latter of the said consequences stand, God doth not make use of the said exhortations, to influence or effect the wills of the saints upon any such terms, as hereby to make them infallibly, infrustrably, necessitatingly, willing to persevere, or to do the things upon which perseverance dependeth.

'For, first, If so, then one and the same act of the will should be both physical and moral, and so be specifically distinguished in, and from itself; for so far as it is produced by the irresistible force or power of the Spirit of God, it must needs be physical, the said irresistible working of the Spirit, being a physical action, and so not proper to produce a moral effect; again, as far as the said exhortations are means to produce or raise this act of the will, or contribute any thing towards it, it must needs be moral, because exhortations are moral causes, and so not capable of producing physical, natural, or necessary effects; now then if it be impossible that one and the same act of the will should be both physical and moral, that is necessary and not necessary, impossible also it is, that it should be produced by the irresistible working of God, and by exhortations of this joint efficiency.

'It may be objected, they who hold or grant such an influence, or operation of the Spirit of God, upon the will which is frustrable, or resistible, do, or must suppose it to be a physical action, as well as that which is irresistible; if so, then the act of the will, so far as it is raised by the means of this action, or operation of God, must according to the tenor of the former arguments be physical also, and so the pretended impossibility, is no more avoided by this opinion than by the other.

'I answer: Though such an operation of God upon the will, as is here mentioned, be in respect of God, and of the manner of its proceeding from him physical, yet in respect of the nature and substance of it, it is properly moral, because it impresseth, and affecteth the will upon which it is acted, after the manner of moral causes, properly so called, that is, persuadingly, not ravishingly, or necessitatingly. When a minister of the gospel in his preaching presseth or persuadeth men to such and such duties or actions, this act as it proceedeth from him, I mean as it is raised by his natural abilities of understanding or speaking, is physical or na-

tural, but in respect of the substance or native tendency of it, it is clearly moral, viz. because it tendeth to incline or move the wills of men, to such or such elections, without necessitating them thereunto; and so comports with those arguments or exhortations in their manner of efficiency by which he presseth or moveth them to such things; by the way to prevent stumbling and quarrelling, it no way follows from the premises, that a minister in his preaching or persuading unto duties should do as much as God himself doth in or towards the persuading of men hereunto, it only follows that the minister doth co-operate with God, which the apostle himself affirms in order to one and the same effect, (i. e.) that he operateth in one and the same kind of efficiency with God, morally or persuadingly, not necessitating, for where one necessitates, and another only persuades, they cannot be said to co-operate, or work the one with the other, no more than two, when the one runs and the other walks a soft pace, can be said to go or walk together. But when two persuade in one and the same action, one may persuade more effectually by many degrees than the other, may have a peculiar act or method of persuading above the other.'

That which is now undertaken to be proved is, that God doth not make use of exhortations, as means for the establishing of the saints in believing, and confirming their perseverance; this is that which by us is assigned unto them, and this is all that the nature of them doth require, that they should be used unto: the certainty of the event whereunto they are applied depending not on their nature, as such means, but on the purpose of God, to use them for that end which he hath designed, and promised to bring about and accomplish.

Before he ventures on any opposition to the intendment of this assertion, he phraseth it so, as either to render it unintelligible to himself and others, or (if any thing be signified by the expressions he useth) to divert it wholly from the mind of them, and their sense, with whom he hath to do: who ever said that God by exhortations, doth influence the wills of men upon such terms, as to make them 'infrustrably and necessitatingly willing to persevere.' Or, can he tell us what is the meaning of those terms, 'infrustrably, necessitatingly willing to persevere;' though it is easy to guess at what

he here intends, yet it is far above my shallow capacity, to reach the sense of these expressions. How any of these terms, relating to the event and issue of things, and in what sense they may be used, I have often shewed; as relating either to the manner of God's operation in and upon the will, or the will's elicitation of its own act (any farther than by relation to that axiom, 'Unumquodque quod est, dum est, necesse est'), they express neither our sense, nor any body's else that I know; that which I shall make bold to take up for Mr. Goodwin's intendment is; that God doth not by exhortations effectually cause the saints to persevere; to be willing to persevere, is to persevere: to be necessitatingly willing, is, I know not what: now if such an efficacy be ascribed to exhortations, as teaches the certainty of the effect, so that the certainty of the effect, as to the event, should be asserted to depend on them as such means, this is nothing to us; we ascribe an efficacy to them *in proprio genere*, but the certainty of that event to whose production they concur, we affirm, as hath been abundantly declared, to depend on other causes.

But the proof of what is here asserted, outruns for uncouth strangeness, the assertion itself, *equis albis*, as they say: for, saith he, 'If this be so' (that is, as you have heard above, how, neither he nor we know) 'then the same act of the will should be both physical and moral;' and,

First, Why so? Because physical and moral means are used for the producing of it; as though sundry causes of several kinds, might not concur to produce one uniform effect, far enough from a necessity of receiving so much as a denomination from each of them; in the concurrence of several causes, whereof some may be free and contingent, others natural and necessary, the effect absolutely follows its next and immediate cause alone; God causes the sun to shine freely; yet is the shining of the sun, a necessary effect of the sun, and not any way free or contingent. God determined the piercing of Christ's side, and so as to the event made it necessary, but yet was the doing of it in them that did it free, as to the manner of its doing, and no way necessary.

But, secondly, suppose the same act of the will, should be said to be both physical and moral upon several accounts? And what if every act of the will in and about things good or bad be so? And it be utterly impossible it should be other-

wise? Yea, 'but then the same act should be specifically distinguished in and from itself.'

Yea, but who told you so? The terms of physical and moral, as related to the acts of the will, are very far from constituting different kinds or species of acts; being only several denominations of the same individual acts upon several regards and accounts; the acts of the will as they flow from that natural faculty, or are elicited thereby, are all physical: but as they relate to a law, whence they are good, or evil, they are moral; the one term expresseth their being, the other their regularity and conformity to some rule whereunto their agents are obliged: *Quid dignum tanto?* If by physical and moral, Mr. Goodwin intends necessary and free, being the first that ever abused those words, and in that abuse of them not consistent with himself (affirming afterward, the act of a minister's preaching, as proceeding from his abilities of understanding and speaking, to be physical or natural, which yet he will not aver to be necessary, but free), he should have told us so, and then though we would not grant that the same act, may not in several respects be both necessary and free, the latter in respect of the manner of its performance, and nature of its immediate cause, the former in respect of the event and the determination of its first causes, yet its consequent is so palpably false, as to the advancing of his former assertion, that it would have been directly denied without any farther trouble.

But he adds: 'It must needs be physical, because it is produced by the physical working of the Spirit of God, which being a physical action cannot produce a moral effect.'

Ans. By physical operation of God on and with the will, we understand only that which is really and effectually so, as different from that which is only moral, and by way of motive and persuasion; now this we say is twofold. The first consisting in the concourse of God as the first cause, and author of all beings to the producing of every entity; such as the acts of the wills of men are; and this in such a way, as is not only consistent with the liberty of the will, in all its acts and actings whatever; but also, as is the foundation of all the liberty that the will hath in its actings; and in respect of this influence of God, the effect produced is only moral or natural, having such a being as is proper to it;

as also it is in respect of the will itself, and its concurrence in operation. The other is that which Mr. Goodwin here calls 'the irresistible force or power of the Spirit:' distinguishing the efficacy of the Spirit and grace of God, in their working in us, to will, and to do, producing those effects, as they are good and gracious, in reference to their rise, end, and rule, whereunto they are related. This then is that which by Mr. Goodwin is here asserted; 'that if there be such an effectual real working of the Spirit and grace of God in us to the producing of any act of the wills of men, they cannot be moral.' That is, they cannot have any goodness in them beyond that which is entitative; and so far, are we now arrived. All efficacious working of the Spirit of God on us must be excluded, or all we do is good for nothing; away with all promises, all prayers, yea, the whole covenant of grace, they serve for no other end, but to keep us from doing good; let us hear the Scripture speak a little in this cause; Deut. xxx. 6. 'The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.' Jer. xxxi. 33. 'This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.' Chap. xxxii. 39. 'I will give them one heart, and one way that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and their children after them.' Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. 'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.' Acts xvi. 14. 'God opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended to the things spoken of Paul.' Phil. i. 29. 'It is given to you in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;' and, chap. ii. 13. 'For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure;' as also Eph. i. 19. 'That ye may know what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead;' and, 2 Thess. i. 11. 'We pray always for you that

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duction of that whereunto the exhortation tends, dealing thus with our whole souls suitably to the nature of all their faculties, as every one of them is fitted and suited to be wrought upon, for the accomplishment of the end he aims at, and in the manner that he intends; briefly, to every act of the will as an act *in genere entis* there is required a really operative and physical concurrence of the providential power of God in its own order, as the first cause. To every act, as good or gracious, the operative concurrence and influence of the Spirit of grace; which yet hinders not but that, by exhortations, men may be provoked and stirred up to the performance of acts as such, and to the performance of them, as good and gracious.

This being not the direct controversy in hand, I do but touch upon it; concerning that which follows, I should perhaps say, we have found *anguem in herba*, but being so toothless and stingless as it is to any that in the least attend to it, it may be only termed, the pad in the straw. Physical and moral are taken to be terms, it seems, equipolent to necessary, and not necessary; which is such a wresting of the terms themselves, and their known use, as men shall not likely meet withal: hence is it that acts physical and necessary are the same; every act of the most free agent under heaven, yea in heaven or earth, is, in its own nature and being, physical; acts also are moral, i. e. good or evil, consequently in order of nature to their existence (of which necessary, or not necessary, are the adjunct manner), in reference to the rule, or law, whereunto their conformity is required. How moral and not necessary come to be terms of the same import, Mr. Goodwin will declare perhaps hereafter, when he shall have leisure to teach as much new philosophy, as he hath already done divinity; in the mean time we deny, that any influence from God on the wills of men, doth make any act of them necessary as to the manner of its production; and so this first argument for the inconsistency of the use of exhortations with the real efficiency of the grace and Spirit of God, is concluded.

That which follows in this section to the end, is a pretended answer to an objection of our author's own framing; being only introduced, to give farther advantage, to express himself against any real efficiency of the Spirit, or grace of

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God, for the production of any good in us, are tied up and confined, we have been now so inured to them, that they do not at all startle us. When Mr. Goodwin shall manifest, that God cannot by the greatness of his power, work in us to will, without ravishing our wills, if we guess aright at the intendment of that expression, he will advance to a considerable success in this contest, not only against us, but God himself.

But an objection presents itself to our author, which he sees a necessity to attempt the removal of, lest an apprehension of its truth, should prove prejudicial to the receiving of his dictates. And this it is: 'That if it be so, that God worketh on the will of man by the way of persuasion only, he doth no more than the ministers of the gospel do, who persuade men by the word to that which is good.' To this he tells you, 'That it indeed follows, that God and ministers work on the will of man in the same way, with the same kind of efficiency, but yet in respect of degrees, God may persuade more effectually than a minister.'

First, That all really efficient, internal working grace of God was denied by Mr. Goodwin, was before discovered; here only it is more plainly asserted. All the workings of God on the wills of men unto good, are merely by persuasion: persuasion we know gives no strength, adds no power, to him that is persuaded to any thing; it only provokes him and irritates him to put forth, exert, and exercise the power which is in himself, unto the things whereunto he is persuaded, upon the motives and grounds of persuasion proposed to him; and the whole effect produced on that account, is, *in solidum*, to be ascribed to the really efficient cause of it, howsoever incited or stirred up. Whereas then, men by nature are dead, blind, unbelieving, enemies to God, he persuades them only to exert the power that is in them, and thereby to live, see, believe, and be reconciled to him: and this is to exalt the free grace of God by Jesus Christ. We know full well who have gone before you in these paths, but shall heartily pray, that none of the saints of God may follow after you, into this contempt of the work of his grace. But,

Secondly, If nothing but persuasion be allowed to God in the work of men's conversion, and in the carrying on of their

obedience to the end, wherein doth the persuasion of God consist, in distinction from the persuasion used in and from the word by ministers, which it is pretended that it may excel (though it is not affirmed that it doth) many degrees. Let it be considered, I say, in what acts of the will, or power of God, his persuasion, so distinct as above mentioned, doth consist: let us know what arguments he useth, by what means he applies them, how he conveys them to the wills of men, that are not coincident with those of the ministry. I suppose, at last, it will be found, that there is no other operation of God in persuading men, as to the ends under consideration, but only what lies or consists in the persuading of the word by the ministers thereof; God looking on without the exerting of any efficacy whatever, which is indeed that which is aimed at, and is really exclusive of the grace of God, from any hand in the conversion of sinners, or preservation of believers.

Thirdly, He doth not indeed assert any such persuading of God; but only tells you, that from what he hath spoken, it doth not follow, 'that God doth no more than ministers in persuading men; and that when two persuade to one and the same action, one may be more effectual in his persuading than another:' but that God is so, or how he is so, or wherein his peculiar persuasions do consist, there is not in his discourse the least intimation.

Fourthly, There is in men a different power as to persuasion; some having a faculty that way, far more eminent and effectual than others, according to their skill and proficiency in oratory and persuasive arts; this only is ascribed to God, that he so excels us, as one man excels another: but how that excellency of his is exerted, that is not to be understood. But there is proof tendered you of all this, from 1 Cor. iii. 9. where ministers are said, 'to co-operate with God, which they cannot do, unless it be with the same kind of efficiency; (well said;) and that when one works necessitatingly, and another by persuasion, they cannot be said to co-operate, no more than one that runs, or another that walks, can be said to walk together.' Certainly our author never dreamed, that any man whatever would put himself to the trouble of examining these dictates, or he would have been more wary of his asserting them, and we had not had so much

not only new and strange divinity, but new and uncouth philosophy, heaped up without any considerable endeavour of proof or confirmation.

First, That two agents cannot concur or co-operate to the producing of the same effect, but with the same kind of efficiency, is a rare notion indeed: was he never persuaded to do any thing in his life? What thinks he of David's and the Amorite's killing of Uriah? of a judge and an executioner slaying a malefactor; of God and Satan moving David to number the people; of God and Joseph's brethren sending him to Egypt? But what need I mention instances? Who knows not that this so confounds all causes efficient, and that principal and instrumental, material, final, formal, which in their production of effects, have all their distinct efficiency, and yet their co-operation.

Secondly, The proof from the Scripture mentioned, extends only to the interesting of ministers in the great honour of co-operating with God, in the work of begetting and increasing faith in their own sphere, according to the work to them committed. But that God and they do work with the same kind of efficiency, it is the main intendment of the apostle in the place cited, 1 Cor. iii. to disprove. He tells you indeed, there is a work of planting and watering, committed to the ministers of the gospel; but the giving of increase (a peculiar working with a distinct kind of efficiency), that is alone to be ascribed to God. It is, I say, his design (who every where abundantly informs us, that 'Faith is the gift of God, wrought in us by the exceeding greatness of his power') to prove in this place, that though the dispensation of the word of the gospel be committed unto men, yet their whole ministry will be vain, and of none effect, unless by an immediate efficacy or working of his Spirit, giving and bestowing faith on his elect, God do give an increase.

Thirdly, For the term of 'necessitating' put upon the real effectual work of God's grace on the wills of men, giving them power, assistance, and working in them to will and to do, as different from that which is purely moral or persuasive, only which communicates no strength or power. I shall need no more, but to reject it with the same fa
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another running, wherewith the inconsi

work of grace, with persuasions, so far as that they be said to co-operate to the producing of the same doth not in the least illustrate what it is intended to for though one run and another go softly (as suppose rying a little loaf, another a great burden of meat for a), and both going to the same place, Why may not they to co-operate to the providing of the same supper? ll agents that co-operate to the producing of the same be together in one place? You may as soon bring hea- d hell together as prove it. And why must real effi- be compared to running, and persuasion to soft walk- though one were supposed to carry on the work faster e other: when we say only, that in the one there is a power exerted from what is in the other; which that be done, might be proved by a thousand instances, and ted by as many similitudes, if any pleasure were taken nd in *causa facili*. God or man then co-operate in re- f the tendency of their working unto the event, not pect of the kinds of their efficiency.

f the seventh section (whereon we shall not need long ist), which in the entrance frames an objection and nds an answer to it, there are three parts. In the first ys, that we affirm, 'That though the will be necessi- by God, yet it is free in her election, which how it may understands not.' But if this were all the inconve- ce that Mr. G. could not understand how to salve the ration of God in man, with the liberty of his will, seeing ise men as himself have herein been content to capti- te their understandings to the obedience of faith, it were t much to be stumbled at; but the truth is, the chimera hose nature he professeth himself unacquainted withal, is eated in his own imagination, where it is easy for every an to frame such notions, as neither himself nor any else an bring to a consistency with reason or truth. Of neces- itating the will to election, we have had occasion more than nce already to treat, and shall not burden the reader with eedless repetitions.

In the second division of the section, he gives you his ment of the manner of the work of God upon the soul the doing of that which is good, and the effect pro- d thereby; whereof the one, as was said before, consists

in persuasions, which he says 'are thus far irresistible, that they who are to be persuaded cannot hinder but that God may persuade them or exhort them, though he prevail not with them.' Which doubtless is a notable exaltation of his grace. Thus Mr. Goodwin works irresistibly with one or other, perhaps every day: and the effect of this persuasion is (that is, when it is effectual), that impression which it leaves upon the soul to the things whereunto it is persuaded. As the case is in the dealing of men one with another, for my part, I see no reason why our author should so often, so heedfully, deliver his judgment concerning this thing, especially without the least attempt of any scriptural proof or endeavour to answer those innumerable clear and express places of Scripture, which he knows are every where, and on all occasions, produced and insisted on, to prove a real efficient acting of God in and with the wills of men, for the producing, working, and accomplishing that which is good in a way distinct from that of persuasion, which contributes no real strength to the person persuaded, concurring only metaphorically in the producing of the effect. Let this at last then suffice; we are abundantly convinced of his denial of the work of God's grace in the salvation of souls.

In the third place, we have a rhetorical flourish over that which he hath been laying out his strength against all this while, being a mere repetition of what hath been already tendered, and given into consideration over and over. If God cause the saints effectually to persevere (his terms of irresistibly and necessitating, have been long since discharged from any farther attendance or service in this warfare) by exhortations, then are all his promises of perseverance in vain. But why so? May not God enjoin the use of means, and promise by them the attainment of the end? May he not promise that to us, which he will work himself effectually in us? If God effectually work in us, to give us by what means soever a new heart, may he not promise to give us a new heart? 'Yea, but amongst men this would be incongruous, yea, ridiculous, that a father should promise his son an inheritance, and then persuade him to take heed he may obtain it.'

t, first, If this be incongruous, yea, ridiculous, amongst their dealings with one another, doth it therefore

follow, that it must be so as to God's dealings with men? 'Are his thoughts as our thoughts, and his ways as our ways?' Is not the wisdom of God foolishness with men, and theirs much more so with him? Are men bound in their dealings with others, to consider them not only in their natural and civil relations, but as impotent and corrupted men, as God in his dealings with them doth?

Secondly, Neither is this course so ridiculous amongst men, as Mr. Goodwin imagineth; that a father having promised his son an inheritance, and instated it on him, or assured it to him, should exhort and persuade him to behave himself worthy of his kindness, and to take heed that he come to the enjoyment of the inheritance which he hath provided for him, by the means that he hath appointed (for the prescription of means for the enjoyment of the inheritance must be supposed to go along with the promise and assurance), is far from being a course so ridiculous as is pretended.

Neither, thirdly, Is this similitude analogous with that which it is produced to illustrate. For,

1. A man may know how, and when, and on what account, an inheritance is settled on him by his father. Of what God promiseth, we have faith only, not knowledge, properly so called; nor always the assurance of faith, as to the enjoyment of the thing promised, but the adherence of faith, as to the truth and faithfulness of the promiser. Nor,

2. Can a father work in his son that obedience which he requireth of him, as he can do, who 'creates a new heart in us and writes his law and fear therein.'

3. This absolute engagement to bestow an inheritance, whether the means of obtaining it be used and insisted on or no, is a thing most remote from what we ascribe to the Lord in his promises of perseverance, which are only that believers shall persevere by the use of means, which means he exhorts them to use, and yet dealing with them in a covenant of grace and mercy, entered into upon account of their utter insufficiency in themselves to do the things that are well pleasing to him, whereunto they are so exhorted. He himself effectually and graciously, according to the tenor of that covenant, works in them what he requires of them, bearing them

forth, in the power of his grace, to the use of the means appointed.

His sections eight and nine, contain and endeavour for the taking off an instance usually given of pressing to the use of means, where the end is infallibly promised to be accomplished and brought about in and by the use of those means. And this is in the passage of Paul, Acts xxvii. whereof something formerly hath been spoken; Paul receives a promise from God, 'That none of the lives of the persons with him in the ship should perish;' this he declares to his company; and how deeply he was concerned in the accomplishment of the promise, and his prediction thereupon, upon the account of the undertaking wherein, against almost all the world, he was then engaged, and the cause for which he was committed to their company and custody, was formerly declared. Notwithstanding this, he afterward exhorts them, and directs to the use of all means imaginable, that were suitable for the fulfilling of the promise he had, and the prediction he had made. Evident it is then, that there is no inconsistency, nor any thing unbecoming any perfection in God, in that compliance of promises and exhortations which we insist upon: he having directed Paul, to walk in that very way and path. God, we say, in the covenant of grace, hath promised that his saints 'shall never leave him, nor forsake him;' that he will abide in unchangeable constancy to be their God; that he will preserve them, and keep them in his hand unto the kingdom of his Son in glory, saving his redeemed ones, with an everlasting salvation, to the accomplishment of the end promised, which he will upon the account of his truth and faithfulness bring about, by means suitable unto, and instituted by him for that end. In the compassing and effecting of this great work, God dealeth with men under a twofold consideration.

First, As rational creatures; so he discovers to them the end promised, with its excellency, loveliness, and satisfaction, thereby stirring up in them desires after it, as that eminent and proportioned good, which they in the utmost issue

thoughts and desires aim at. Farther, on the fore-

d account, that they are rational creatures, endued

ional appetite or will, for the choosing of that which

ed an understanding to judge of it, and of the

means for the attainment of the end; God reveals to them the means conducing to the end, proposing them to them to be chosen and embraced, and closed withal for the compassing of the end proposed. And that they may be yet dealt withal agreeably to their nature, and those principles in them, which they are created withal, that God might have glory by their acting suitably to such a nature, and such principles, he exhorts and provokes them to choose those ways and means, which he hath so allotted (as before mentioned) for the end aimed at; and that they should be thus dealt withal, their very natural condition of being free intellectual agents doth require.

Secondly, As sinners or agents disenabled in themselves for the work prescribed to them, and required of them, for the attaining of the end they aim at, namely, in spiritual things: and on that account, he puts forth towards them, and in them, the efficacy of his power, for the immediate and special working of those things in them, and by them, and which, as rational creatures bound unto an orderly obedience, they are pressed and exhorted unto. To manifest the inconsistency of such a procedure, and the unanswerableness of it, to the infinite wisdom of God (though the Scriptures expressly deliver it in innumerable places, as hath been shewn) is that which by Mr. Goodwin is in this discourse attempted. His particular endeavour in the place under consideration is, to manifest that, when God promiseth to bring about and effect any thing infallibly (by the use of means), it is in vain altogether, that any exhortation should be urged on them, who are to use the means so appointed, for the accomplishment of it. And to the instance above mentioned, concerning Paul, he replies, chap. 13. sect. 8.

'First, It is the generally received opinion of divines, that promises of temporal good things are still conditional, and not absolute; which opinion they maintain upon grounds not easily shaken. Now evident it is, that the promise under question, was a promise of this nature and kind, relating only to the preservation of the temporal lives of men.'

Ans. That all promises of temporal things without exception, are conditional, that is, so as to be suspended on any conditions, not promised to be wrought with equal assurance to that which depends on them, is not the judgment

of any divine I know, unless it be of Mr. Goodwin, and those of the same persuasion with him in the matter of our present controversy. Whoever but they will say (if they will), that the promise of bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt was conditional? Let them that do say so assign the condition on which the accomplishment of that promise was suspended. The promise made to the parents of Samson of his birth and mighty actions, what condition was it suspended on? And yet was it a promise of a temporal thing. Though this may be accounted a general rule, because for the most part it is so, yet may not God make a particular exception thereunto? Did he not so in the case of Hezekiah, as to his living fifteen years, as also in those cases before mentioned? It is true all such promises have appointed means for their accomplishment, but not conditions whereon their fulfilling is absolutely suspended.

But he adds, 'Those words of Paul to the centurion and soldiers lately mentioned (Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be safe), undeniably prove the said promise to have been not absolute, but conditional; for in case God should have promised absolutely and without all exception that they should have been safe, Paul had plainly contradicted the truth of it by affirming, not that they should not, but that they could not, be safe, otherwise than upon the condition of the mariners abiding in the ship.'

Ans. 1. This is boldly ventured; God promiseth that the end shall be accomplished; Paul exhorteth to the use of the means for the attainment of that end, and in that contradicts the truth of God's promise, if it be not conditional; and why so? Who ever said that God promised that they should be safe and preserved in the neglect of means? They were men, and not stones, that God promised so to safeguard. And it was by his blessing upon means that he intended to preserve them; therefore, he that stirred them up to the use of means, contradicted the promise, unless it were conditional. Paul says indeed, they could not be safe unless the mariners abode in the ship; not suspending the certainty of God's promise upon their continuance in the ship, but manifesting the means whereby God would bring about their safety.

That which ensues in the two following exceptions (as,

Paul's persuading them to take meat, which conduced to their safety, and their casting the wheat into the sea for the same end), amounts no higher than the affirmations already considered. Asserting an infallible promise of an end to be attained by means, and an exhortation to the use of means, with the actual use of them on the account of their necessity as means, are inconsistent; which is plainly, without the least show of proof or truth, to beg the thing in question.

Neither is his case in hand at all promoted by comparing this particular promise given at such a time and season, with those general promises of earthly blessings made to the obedience of the Jews in the land of Canaan, mentioned Deut. xxviii. 3, 4.

Of that which, sixthly, follows in the ninth section, being a marvellous pretty discourse about the promise here made, as though it should be only this, that though the ship were lost and miscarried, yet none of them in it should perish thereby (merely upon the account of the ship's miscarrying), though on some other account, they might be drowned at the same time; which upon narrow scanning he hath at last found out to be the sense of the place, may well deserve the consideration of them who have nothing else to do; for my part I have other employment.

That which we affirm concerning the words of God by his angel, to Paul, is, that they were such a promise as could not but infallibly be accomplished, according to the tenor of what is in those words expressed; nor in respect of the faithfulness of God could it otherwise be, but that it must so fall out and come to pass as was appointed, although the accomplishment of it was to be brought about by the eminent blessing of God, upon the means that were to be used by them, to whom and concerning whom it was given.

For, first, The promise was not only concerning the mariners and the rest in the ship, for the preservation of whom the means formerly mentioned were used, but of Paul's appearance before Cæsar, a great and eminent work whereunto he was designed; Acts ix. 15. 'Fear not, Paul, thou must be brought before Cæsar.' Look then what infallibility in respect of the event there was, as to Paul's appearance before Cæsar, the same there was in the preservation of the lives of the rest with him. Now although the staying of the mariners from

going out of the ship, was a means that Paul was kept alive to be brought before Cæsar, yet can any one be so forsaken of common sense as to say, that it was the condition of the purpose of God, concerning the fulfilling of that testimony, which according to his appointment Paul was to make at Rome, with all the mighty and successful travel for the propagation of the gospel, which he after this was engaged in, was it all now cast upon the fall of an uncertain condition, not at all determined of God as to its accomplishment? Doth the infinitely wise God delight to put the purposes of his heart, and those of so great concernment to the kingdom of his Son, and his own glory, in the everlasting welfare of innumerable souls, to such uncertain hazards, which by various ways obvious and naked before his eyes, he could have prevented?

Secondly, It is part of the prediction of Paul from the promise he had received (and therewith a revelation thereof), that they should be cast upon a certain island, God having some work for him there to do; now was this part of the promise conditional or no? If it be said that it was, let the condition on which it depended be assigned. Nothing can be imagined, unless it be that the wind sat in such or such a quarter; it is then supposed that God promised Paul and his company, should be cast on an island for their preservation, provided the wind served for that end or purpose: but who I pray commands the winds and seas? Doth the wind so 'blow where it listeth,' as not to be at the command of its maker? It is not enough that we cast off his yoke and sovereignty from man, but must the residue of the creation be forced so to pay their homage to our free wills as to be exempted thereby from God's disposal? If this part of the promise were infallible and absolute, as to the certainty of its accomplishment, why not the other part of it also?

Thirdly, Paul makes confession of his faith to his company, concerning the accomplishment of this promise. I believe God, saith he, ὅτι οὕτως ἔσται καθ' ὃν τρόπον λελάληταί μοι. It shall 'so come to pass in the same manner as it was told me;' clearly engaging the truth and faithfulness of that God which he worshipped (for his testimony to whose truth he was then in bonds) for the accomplishment of what he had spoken to them: viz. 'that not one of them should be

lost.' Now supposing that any one person had by any accident fallen out of the ship, Mr. Goodwin tells you there had been no opportunity or possibility left unto God to have fulfilled his promise; true, for it had been wholly frustrated, he having undertaken for the lives of every one of them; but supposing that engagement of his, he that says any one might have so perished, is more careful doubtless to defend his own hypothesis than the honour of the truth and faithfulness of God.

Evident then it is, notwithstanding the tortures, racks, and wheels, applied by Mr. Goodwin to this text, with the confession pretended (and but pretended) to be extorted from it (which but that it hath gotten sanctuary under his name and wing, would be counted ridiculous), that here is a promise of God, making an event infallible and necessary in respect of its relation thereto, by a clear consistency with exhortations to the use of free and suitable means, for the accomplishment of the thing so promised.

Sect. 10. He objects farther to himself, 'That in sundry places of Scripture, as 1 Cor. x. 12, 13. Phil. ii. 12, 13. Heb. vi. 4, 5. 9. there are promises of perseverance, and exhortations unto it joined together, and therefore men who deny a regular and due consistency between them, do impute folly and weakness to the Holy Ghost.' Whereunto he answers sundry things to the end of the eleventh section. As,

'First, They are many degrees nearer to the guilt of the crime specified, who affirm the conjunction mentioned to be found in the said Scriptures, than they who deny the legitimacy of such a conjunction; the incongruity of the conjunction hath been sufficiently evinced, but that any such conjunction is to be found either in the Scriptures quoted, or in any others, is no man's vision, but his who hath darkness for vision.'

Ans. If our adversary's *ipse dixit* may pass current, we shall quickly have small hopes left of carrying on the cause under consideration. All our testimonies must be looked upon as cashiered long since from attending any longer on the trial in hand, and all our arguments as blown away like flies in the summer. The very things here in question, viz. That there is an inconsistency between promises of perseverance, and exhortations to the use of the means whereby

it may be effected; that God hath made no such promises, or appointed no such exhortations, and that those who apprehend any such things have darkness for vision, are all confirmed by the renewed stamp of *teste meipso;* to which proof I shall only say, 'Valeat quantum valere potest.'

But he adds, 'That in none of the places cited, is there any promise of perseverance, is evident to him that shall duly consider the tenor and import of them.

'For, first, It is one thing to say and teach, that God will so limit as well the force as the continuance of temptations, that the saints may be able to bear; another to make a promise of absolute perseverance; yea, those very words, That ye may be able to bear it, clearly import, that all that is here promised unto the believing Corinthians, is an exhibiting of means to perseverance, if they will improve them accordingly, not an infallible certainty of their perseverance. And that caveat, Let him that thinketh he stands take heed lest he fall, plainly supposeth a possibility of his falling, who thinketh upon the best grounds that he standeth sure; for that this caveat was not given to hypocrites or unsound believers, or to such who please themselves with a loose and groundless conceit of the goodness of their condition Godward, is evident, because it were better that such men should fall from their present standing of a groundless conceit, than continue their standing; nor would the apostle have ever cautioned such to take heed of falling away, whose condition was more like to be made better than worse by their falling. And besides, to understand the said caveat of loose believers, overthrows the pertinency of it to their cause who insist upon it, to prove a due consistency between exhortations to perseverance, and promises to perseverance, as is evident. If then it be directed to true and sound believers, it clearly supposeth a possibility at least of their falling, in case they shall not take heed, or else their taking heed would be no means, at least no necessary means, of their standing. And farther, it supposeth also a possibility at least of their non-taking heed, or that they might possibly not take heed hereof, otherwise the caveat or admonition had been in vain; men have no need of being admonished to do that which they are under no possibility to omit. If then the standing or persevering of the saints depends upon their taking heed lest they fall,

and their taking heed in this kind be such a thing which they may possibly omit, evident it is that there is a possibility of their non-persevering.'

Ans. This last division of the tenth section labours to evince, that in the first of the places above mentioned, viz. 1 Cor. x. 12, 13. there is not a promise of perseverance, in conjunction with exhortations unto the use of means unto that end. The words are, 'Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.' But,

First, It is not in the least measure necessary, or can be upon any account whatever required of us, that we should produce texts of Scripture in an immediate dependance and coherence in the same place, containing both the promises and exhortations mentioned; they being for the most part proposed upon most different accounts, and for immediately different ends and purposes; the one (namely), as in the revelation of them, respecting of our consolation, the other our obedience. Nor can they ever the more be denied to be in a conjunction and consistency, though they were not to be found but in different places of Scripture (which that they are, especially as to that case which is questioned, hath been abundantly declared), than if they were still combined in the same coherence and connexion of words. But yet,

Secondly, I say there is, in the place forenamed, a most pathetical exhortation to the use of the means whereby we may persevere, and a most infallible promise, that we shall so persevere, and not, by any temptation whatever, be utterly cast down or separated from God in Christ. The first in ver. 12. 'Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall;' and ver. 14. 'Wherefore my dearly beloved flee from idolatry;' the latter in ver. 13. 'There hath no temptation taken you,' &c. First, That there is an exhortation to the use of means for perseverance, is not denied by our author, but granted, with an attempt to improve it for the furtherance of his own design. That there is a promise also of perseverance, is no less evident; the diversion and turning

away of any believer from God must be by temptation. Temptations are of various sorts, both in respect of their immediate rise, nature, and efficiency: whatever (whence ever it proceed) turns from God, more or less, in part or in whole, as is imagined, is temptation. Now the apostle here engageth the faithfulness of God in the preservation of believers from the power of temptations, so as it shall not prevail against them to the ends before specified. 'God (saith he) is faithful;' and there is no need of his mentioning that property of God, which is his immutable constancy in the performance of his promises, but only to assure believers, that he will preserve them as he hath spoken; the thing promised by the apostle in the name of God, is (not only that the saints may be able to bear temptations that shall befal them, ὑπὲρ ὃ δύνασθε, and τοῦ δύνασθαι ὑμᾶς ὑπενεγκεῖν, having quite another importance than what is here intimated in the expression 'may be able,' in capital letters) that he will not suffer any temptation to come upon them, that shall be above that strength (and pervalent against it) which he will communicate to them: and for those which do befal them he will make way for their escaping, that with and by the strength received they may bear them. So that not only sufficiency of means to persevere, but perseverance itself by those means, and God's ordering all things so in his faithfulness, that no assault shall befal them above the power of the strength given them to bear, is here asserted. Now the promise here given is either absolute or conditional. If absolute, that is, so far as that it shall infallibly be accomplished, not so depending on any thing that in respect of the event may, or may not be, as to be left at uncertainty for its fulfilling, it is all that is of us desired. If it shall be said that it is conditional, I desire that the condition from whence it is so said to be, may be assigned. If it shall be said (as it is) that it is 'in case they willingly suffer not themselves to be overcome of temptations;' I ask, whether the strength and ability that God affords to his saints to resist temptations, be not in the strengthening and confirming their wills against them? And if so, whether this promise so interpreted doth not resolve itself into this proposition, 'I will not suffer my saints to be overborne by temptations, above the strength I will give them to bear, provided they be not pressed with temptations above

the strength I give unto them.' The promise then is absolute, either that no temptations shall befal believers above that they have received, or, that strength not to be overcome, shall be afresh communicated to them upon the assaults of any new temptations.

3. This being established, that here is a firm promise of perseverance, against which Mr. G. opposeth scarce any thing at all, and nothing at all to the purpose, his whole ensuing discourse falls of itself; for from the caveat used at the entrance of this promise, and the exhortation at the close, both tending to stir up the saints, to whom the promise is made (many of whom have no distinct assurance of their interest in this, or any other promise), to be heedfully careful in using the means of perseverance, and avoiding the sins that in their own nature tend to the interruption of it; no other possibility of falling away can be concluded, but such as may have a consistency with the faithfulness of God in the promise he hath given: that is, a possibility, as they say, 'in sensu diviso,' without respect had to the infallibly preventing causes of it; not 'in sensu composito.' A possibility in reference to the nature of the things themselves, which is a sufficient bottom for caveats to be given, and exhortations to be made to them concerned in them, not at all in respect of the purposes and promises of God, infallibly preventing the reducing into act, of that possibility. These exceptions then notwithstanding, it appears in the 1 Cor. x. 1—14. there is a conjunction of a gracious promise of perseverance, with effectual exhortations to the use of means whereby we may persevere; and consequently, they who deny a due consistency between them, do impute folly or weakness to the Holy Ghost; ὅπερ ἔδει δεῖξαι.

He proceeds to the next place pointed to by himself, to prove a consistency between promises and exhortations under consideration: to wit, Phil. ii. 12, 13. 'Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.' Evident it is, that you have here conjoined by the Holy Ghost as weighty and pathetical an exhortation, as he almost any where useth in the Scripture, with an assertion of grace, as

eminently operative and effectual, as by any means can be expressed.

But, saith he, 'It is one thing to affirm that God worketh in man as to will so to do, i. e. to enable men to do or put in execution what they first will, or to assist in the doing or executing itself, another to promise or work infallibly, and without all possibility of frustration in men, perseverance. There is little or no affinity between these: but how and in what sense God is said to be ἐνεργῶν, working in men both to will and to do of his good pleasure, we shall have occasion to open more at large in the latter part of this work.'

Ans. I dare say, an indifferent reader will conclude, that Mr. Goodwin was very hard put to it for an answer, finding him contenting himself with such sorry shifts, and evident pervertings of the words of the text, as those here mentioned. For, first, How come the words to be changed into a working, 'as to will, so to do,' that is, perhaps, neither the one nor the other? who taught him to render καὶ τὸ θέλειν, καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν, 'as to will, so to do?' But, secondly, The chief of the sport made with the words, consists in the exposition given of them, as they lie in this new translation; 'to work in them as to will, so to do; that is, to do; what they first will; not that he works in them to will, but that he assists them in doing what they first will.' But what is now become of the *tàm quàm*, above mentioned? how doth he work in them as to will, so to do, if he only assists them in doing, what of themselves without his assistance they first will? Rather than it shall be granted, that God by his grace works effectually on the wills of men, to the producing of their elicit acts of believing and obedience, any course may be warranted for the perverting of the expressions, where such an operation seems to be held out. Perhaps this persuasion also, of the efficacy of the grace of God on the wills of men, is such, that if it be found, in any place of Scripture, to be declared or asserted, it is enough to make wise and considering prudent men to question their authority. But, thirdly, saith he, 'This is not infallibly to work perseverance.' I say, shew what else is required to perseverance, but to 'will and do,' according to the mind of God, which of his own good pleasure, he promiseth effectually to work in believers, and you say something that may render your reasonings consi-

derable; but it seems we must be kept in abeyance for an answer to this, until his criticism be ready to manifest, how God is said to be ἐνεργῶν, 'working in men,' perhaps what is never wrought without any such effect as is imagined. What may by him be brought forth to this purpose, time will shew. But if he be able to make ὁ θεὸς ἐστιν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν, 'God is working in you to will and to do,' forsooth from the participal expression of the verb, he will manifest more skill in Greek, than he hath hitherto in divinity, in all his learned treatises. So that here is a second instance of a conjunction of promises of perseverance, with exhortations to use the means suited thereunto; which whoso denies to have a just and sweet consistency, do charge the Holy Ghost with folly or weakness; ὅπερ ἔδει δεῖξαι.

Thirdly, The verses pointed to out of Heb. vi. 4, 5. 9. do not so directly express the conjunction insisted on, as those places already considered do; only the discourse there used by the apostle is peremptory, that men may, without any disparagement to their wisdom or reason, earnestly deal with others, and exhort them to avoid falling away from God, though they are fully persuaded, that those whom they so exhort, by the help of those exhortations, and upon other considerations, shall abide with God to the end, or be attended with things accompanying salvation. But had Mr. Goodwin been pleased to look to the following verses, wherein the apostle gives an account of the ground of this persuasion of his, he might have found something to exercise the best of his skill upon. The words are, 'Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak: for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love which ye have shewed towards his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister: and we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end.' He tells them, ver. 10. it is upon the account of the righteousness of God, in carrying on the work of their labour of love which was begun in them, and which they had shewn or manifested, that he had this persuasion concerning them; which, in the ensuing verses, he farther pursues, clearing up the engagement of the righteousness of God in his oath; of which elsewhere. So that notwithstand-

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final perseverance unto the saints; and this another, God will certainly, infrustrably, and infallibly work this perseverance in the saints. These two things only supposed, the light of the truth of the said minor proposition breaks forth from between them with much evidence and power: for, first, If the said threatenings be intended by God for the prevention of the apostacy of the saints, and consequently to effect their perseverance, the way and manner wherein this end intended by God is to be effected by them, must needs be by their ingenerating or raising a fear or apprehension in the saints of eternal death; it being the native property of fear, mixed with hope, to awaken and provoke men to the use of such means which are proper to prevent the danger or evil feared; there is no other way imaginable how or whereby the threatenings we speak of should operate towards the perseverance of the saints for the preventing of their apostacy, but that mentioned, viz. by working in them a fear or dread of the evil threatened. Therefore, secondly, Evident it is, that such promises made, and made known unto the saints, by which they are made incapable of any such fear, are absolutely destructive of the efficiency, which is proper to the said threatenings, to exhibit towards the prevention of apostacy in the saints, or for the causing of them to persevere. And, lastly, It is every whit as evident, that such promises, whereby God should assure the saints, that they shall not apostatize, but persevere, are apt and proper to render them incapable of all fear of eternal death, and consequently are apparently obstructive of, and destructive unto, the native tendency of the said threatenings towards and about the perseverance of the saints. These threatenings can do nothing, contribute nothing, towards the perseverance of the saints, but by the mediation of the fear of evil in them, upon their non-persevering; therefore, whatsoever hardens them against this fear, or renders them incapable of it, supersedes all the virtue and vigour which are to be found in these threatenings, for or towards the effecting of their perseverance.'

Ans. First, Be it granted, that one end of God in his threatenings, is to prevent apostacy in the saints, by stirring them up to take careful heed to the ways and means whereby they may persevere, and that they no otherwise work or cause

perseverance, but as they so stir up and provoke men to the things wherein they are to abide; but this is not their only end. They are also discoveries to all the world of the severity of God against sin, and that it is his judgment that they who commit it are worthy of death.

Secondly, If by absolute promises of final perseverance, you intend such promises of perseverance, in and by the use of means, instituted and appointed by God himself, for the accomplishment of the end promised, which are not made or given, upon the consideration of any worth in them to whom they are made, nor do depend, as to their accomplishment, on any such condition in them as in the event and issue may not be fulfilled, this observation also is granted. You may add also, that God will certainly, effectually, and infallibly work in them an abiding with him to the end, or put his law in their hearts, that they shall never depart from him. If by infrustrably also, you intend only that he will so work it as that his counsel and purpose shall not in the end be frustrated or disappointed, we grant that also, for he hath said 'his counsel shall stand and he will do all his pleasure.'

These things being thus supported, let us try the inferences from them, that must make good the former assertion, concerning the frustration of the use of comminations by them, for they are singled out to bear the weight of this charge.

To the first assumption then and inference I say, There is a twofold fear of eternal death and destruction. 1. An anxious perplexing fear, in respect of the end itself. 2. A watchful careful fear, in respect of the means leading thereunto. In respect of the first, it is utterly denied, that the use and end of the threatenings of God, in respect of his saints, are to ingenerate any such fear in them, it being directly opposed to that faith, assurance, peace, boldness, consolation, and joy, that God is pleased to afford to them, and abundantly exhorts them to live up unto: yea, an anxious abiding fear of hell, is fully contrary to that very conditional assurance of salvation, which Mr. Goodwin himself, in respect of their present condition, allows to them. Nor hath the Lord instituted his ordinances at such a difference and opposition one to another, as that, at the same time, towards the same persons, they should be effectual to beget opposite

and contrary frames and principles. For the other, or a watchful heedful fear for the avoiding of the way and means, that would lead them, and do lead others, to destruction, that is not in the least inconsistent with any assurance, that God is pleased by his promises to give to his saints of their perseverance. God will have them expect their perseverance in the way wherein he hath promised it; that is, by the use of such and such means, helps, and advantages, as he hath appointed for the effectual accomplishment thereof. And therefore nothing is in vain or uselessly applied to them, which, according to his appointment, is suited to the stirring of them up to the use of the means ordained for that end, as before mentioned. Therefore, to Mr. Goodwin's second assertion, which he calls 'evident;' I say,

First, That it is not the making, or the bare making known to the saints of the promises of God, that will work the end for which they are given to them, or enable them to mix them with faith; and according to the strength of that, and not according to the truth that is in the promises themselves, is their assurance of the things promised. And therefore, notwithstanding all the clear promises of perseverance which are made, and made known to them, we see very many of them not to come up to any such assurance thereof, as to be freed from the first sort of fear mentioned; which yet is the proper issue of unbelief, to the begetting whereof in them, God hath not instituted any ordinance.

Secondly, That none of the saints of God are, by the promises of grace which we assert, freed from that fear which is the proper product and effect of God's comminations in respect of them; and therefore by them there is no obstruction laid in the way of the proper efficiency of those threatenings. What is added, in the third and last place, is only a repetition of what was before spoken, without any attempt of proof; unless he would have it looked upon as a conclusion from the premises, whose weakness being discovered as to the intent and purpose in hand, we need not farther trouble ourselves with it. Instead of Mr. Goodwin's, now considered, take these few observations, which will give so much light into the whole matter under debate, as may supersede his whole ensuing discourse.

First then, It may be observed (as it was, by the way, in

the foregoing discourse), that notwithstanding the promises of perseverance which are given to the saints, yet many there are, who are not enabled all their days to mix them with faith (although their interest and portion lie in them, no less than theirs who, through grace, attain the greatest assurance), and on that account do never all their days get free from some bondage, by reason of the fear of death and destruction. And in respect of such as these, the comminations and threatenings insisted on, may have much of that end accomplished which, by Mr. Goodwin, is assigned to them; not that such a frame is directly aimed at in them, Christ dying to deliver them, who, by reason of death, were in bondage all their days, from that bondage which the fear of death for sin doth keep the souls of men in, and under, but that it follows and will follow upon their darkness and weakness of faith.

Secondly, That the promises of perseverance being of the effecting and accomplishment of it, by and in the use of means, do not nor will give deliverance to them to whom they are made from fear of death and hell, but only whilst they conscientiously use the means appointed for them to walk in: so that upon their deflexion from the rule which is attended with mercy and peace, the threatenings of God to sin and sinners, to apostacy and apostates, do lay hold on them in their full force and efficacy; especially to the ingenerating in them a terror of the Lord (as the apostle speaks) and an abhorrency of their ways, a loathing of them as not good, that would cause them to fall into the hands of the living God. So that all Mr. Goodwin's arguings, not being levied against the certainty of perseverance, but men's certainty that they shall persevere (which some never attain unto, some lose either in whole or in part, oftentimes), are not to the business in hand.

Thirdly, That eternal death and destruction is not the only subject of God's threatenings, nor all the evil that they may have a fear of whom he deals withal by them; desertion, rejection, rebukes, sharp and keen arrows, blows of God's hand, temporal death itself, with the like, are also threatened; yea, and so often in an eminent and dreadful manner, have been inflicted, that though they might be supposed to have always some comfortable assurance of deliverance from the wrath that is to come, yet the threatenings

God may be suited to beget in them this fear of evil to such a height, as may make their 'bowels to flow like water, trembling to enter into their bones, and all their joints to tremble.'

Fourthly, That the end of the threatenings of God, being to discover to men the connexion that is, by his appointment, between the sins exagitated and the punishment threatened, whence the fear mentioned doth consequently ensue, they may obtain their full and primary effect, though that fear be not ingenerated, if they be prevailed on by any other considerations, so that the sin be avoided.

Fifthly, That when the saints do walk orderly, regularly, and closely with God, in the use of means by him appointed, and so doing, from the promises of perseverance, do receive a comfortable assurance, that they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, the begetting in them of fears of death and hell, is neither useful in itself, nor are they intended of God to be their portion. But if at any time they turn aside from the holy commandment, and thereby fail of the persuasion of their perseverance (as their faith will be by such means impaired), though the certainty of the thing itself be no less infallible than formerly, yet by the threatenings of God to them it may be needful, to rouse them (by the terrors of the Lord in them) from the condition whereinto they have cast themselves.

I doubt not but that from the light of these and the like considerations which might farther be insisted on, it will appear that there may be and is an harmonious consistency between the promises and threatenings of the Scripture, notwithstanding the mist that is raised in a long and tedious discourse to interrupt the evidence thereof.

In the 13th section, under pretence of answering an objection, a long discourse is drawn forth farther to varnish over what was before spoken. Nothing of importance to my best observation being added, it may be reduced to these four heads:

First, An assertion, 'That the threats against apostacy do not belong to hypocrites; that is, to them that are not really regenerate, let their profession be what it will; for hypocrites ought not to persevere in the way wherein they are to the end, and therefore there is no danger of their fall-

ing away from it.' Which is a ridiculous piece of sophistry; for though they may not be exhorted to continue in their hypocrisy which corrupts and vitiates their profession, yet they may in their profession, which in itself is good. And though there is no danger of leaving their hypocrisy, yet there is of their waxing worse and worse, by falling from the beginnings of grace which they have received, the profession which they have made, and the regular conversation which they have entered upon. So that notwithstanding any thing said to the contrary, the comminations under consideration may principally belong to some kind of professors, who notwithstanding all their gifts and common graces which they have received, yet in a large sense may be termed hypocrites, as they are opposed to them who have received the Spirit with true and saving grace.

Secondly, He says, 'It is evident that they belong unto true believers from Heb. vi. 4—6. 9. x. 26, 27. 29.' but if there were no better evidence of the concernment of true believers in the threatenings made to apostacy, than what can be drawn from the places mentioned, I dare undertake that Mr. Goodwin shall never prove any such concernment of theirs therein, whilst his eyes are open; but about this I shall not at present contend.

Thirdly, He tells us, 'That the end and aim of God in these threatenings is the good of believers.' Of which as far as they are concerned in them, I much less doubt, than I do of the clearness of the proof of this assertion, from Psal. lxxxv. 8. 'I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people and to his saints, but let them not turn again to folly.' A place that I presume was hooked in here violently, for want of a fitter opportunity to wrest it with a by-interpretation, because it looks so hardly on the doctrine which our author hath undertaken to defend. But let this pass also.

His fourth assertion, which he pursues at large, or rather with many words, is, 'That these threatenings have no tendency to the good of believers, but only by begetting in them
ar of hell and destruction; which that they ought to do,
rongly proved from Luke xii. 4, 5. where we are bid
r him who can cast both body and soul into hell-fire.'
ough the logic of this argument doth scarce appear

to me, or the strength of the inference from the text, there being a great difference between 'fearing him who can cast both body and soul into hell-fire,' and fearing of hell-fire: between fearing God for his severity and power, in opposition to the weakness and limitedness of persecutors (even whilst we 'fear not their fears, but sanctify the Lord of Hosts in our hearts, making him our dread and our fear'), and such a fear of punishment as is inconsistent with the promises of God that we shall be preserved in obedience, and so be free from it. Yet I shall consider the following discourse that is built thereon. Supposing all that Mr. Goodwin observes from this text, and that the reason of the fear here enjoined, is taken from the power of God to cast into hell, yet the whole of the argument thence amounts but thus far, because such who are threatened to be persecuted by men who can only kill their bodies, ought rather to fear God who can extend his power of punishing to the destruction of body and soul: of those that offend him, therefore, there is such a fear ingenerated in the saints by the threatenings of the word, as is inconsistent with the truth of God's steadfastness in his covenant with them, to keep them up to obedience unto the end.

Sect. the 14th, he farther pleads from Heb. xi. 7. 2 Kings xxii. 19, 20. 'That the eminentest, holiest men that live may do many things from a principle of fear, or of being afraid of the judgments of God that they should come upon them, and upon that account have been put upon ways that were acceptable to God.'

Ans. We know that the 'fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom:' and the fear 'of the Lord and his goodness,' is a great mercy of the covenant of grace. This is not the thing here pleaded for: it is a thing quite of another nature, even that ascribed to the strange nations that were transplanted into Samaria, by the king of Syria, upon the captivity and removal of the ten tribes, and frightened by lions that destroyed some of them, who did yet continue to worship their own idols, under the dread of God which was upon them, which is called, 'the fear of the Lord.' To complete this fear it is required that a man have such an apprehension of the coming of hell and wrath upon him, as that he be not relieved against it, by any interposal of promise, or

ought else, from God, that he should be preserved in the way and path whereby he shall assuredly find deliverance from that which he fears. How far this kind of fear, the fear of hell, not as declarative of the terror of the Lord, but as probable to betide and befal the persons so fearing it, and that solely considered as an evil to himself, may be a principle of any act of acceptable gospel obedience is not cleared by Mr. Goodwin, nor easily will be so. For,

1. That it is not the intendment of any divine threatenings to beget such a fear, in reference to them that believe, hath been declared.

2. It is no fruit or product of the Spirit of life and love, which, as hath been shewn, is the principle of all our obedience and walking with God.

3. It holds out a frame of spirit directly contrary to what we are called and admitted unto under the gospel; 'for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind;' 2 Tim. i. 7. and Rom. viii. 15. 'We have not received the spirit of bondage unto fear, but the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba Father.' The spirit of this fear and dread, and the bondage that attends it, is at open variance with the spirit of liberty, boldness, power, adoption, and a sound mind wherewith believers are endued. And,

4. It is that which the Lord Christ intended to remove and take away from his, by his death; Heb. ii. 15. 'He died that he might deliver them, who for fear of death were in bondage all their days.'

This fear then, I say, which is neither promise of the covenant, nor fruit of the Spirit, nor product of saving faith, will scarce, upon strict inquiry, be found to be any great furtherer of the saints' obedience; what use the Lord is pleased to make of this dread and terror in the hearts of any of his, for the hedging up their ways from folly, and staving them off from any actual evil when through the strength of temptation they do begin to cast off the law of life and love whereby they are governed, is not in the least prejudiced by any thing asserted in the doctrine of the saints' perseverance; towards some, who, though they are persuaded of the perseverance of the saints indefinitely, yet have no persuasion, or at least no prevailing cheering assurance that themselves are

saints (which Mr. Goodwin thinks to be the condition of far the greatest part of believers) it hath its full power and extent, its whole efficacy depending on the apprehensions of the mind wherein it is. Towards the residue, who upon abiding grounds and sure foundations have obtained a comfortable, spiritual persuasion of their own interest in the promises of God, that the consideration of hell and judgment as the due debt of sin and necessary vindication of the glory of God hath also its effects and influence, as far as God is pleased to exercise them therewith, acquainting them continually with his terror, and filling them with an abhorrency of those ways which in and of themselves, tend to so dismal an end and issue, hath been declared.

Secondly, The places of Scripture mentioned by Mr. Goodwin doubtless will not reach his intendment. Of Noah it is said, that he was εὐλαβεὶς after he was τραυματισθεὶς, being warned of God of that flood that was for to come upon the world of ungodly men, and the salvation of himself and his family by the ark; being filled with the reverence of God and assured of his own preservation, he industriously sets himself about the use of the means, whereby it was to be accomplished. That because a man assured of an end from God himself, in and by the use of means, did with a reverential fear of God, not of any evil threatened which he was to be preserved from, set himself to a conscientious use of means whereby the promised end of God's own institution is to be brought about; therefore the fear of hell (such a fear as hath been described) is one principle of the obedience of the saints in their walking with God, and such as they ought to cherish, as being a means appointed of God for that end and purpose, is an argument of no great value here with us. Neither surely will the conclusion intended be more evidently educed, from the tenderness of the heart of Josiah under the preaching of the law mentioned in the second place, and therefore I shall not need to call it into examination.

But it is added farther, sect. 14. p. 314. 'The present state and frame of the hearts and souls of the saints duly considered, which are made up as well of flesh and corruption, as of spirit and grace, the former having need of bridles for restraint, as well as the latter of spurs for quicken-

ing, evident it is that arguments or motives drawn from fear of punishment, are as necessary and proper for them in respect of the one, as incitements from love, in respect of the other. A whip for the horse (says Solomon), a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back. The flesh even in the wisest of men, is a fool; and would be unruly without a rod ever and anon shaken over it; nor should God have made such gracious, bountiful, and effectual provision, for the perseverance of the saints, as now he hath done, had he not engaged as well the passion of fear within them, as of love, to be their guardian keeper. It is true perfect love casteth out fear, but who amongst the saints themselves can say either that his heart is clean, or his love perfect? Perfect love casteth out flesh, as well as fear; yea, true love until flesh be cast out preserveth fear, for its assistant and fellow-helper; the flesh would soon make love a wanton, and entice her unto folly, did not fear dissolve the enchantment and protect her chastity.'

Of this last division of the 34th section, there are two parts: The first confirmative of what was spoken before, concerning the usefulness of the fear of hell and punishment for the furthering of the saints' obedience. The other responsatory to what is urged to the contrary from 1 John iv. 18. 'Perfect love casteth out fear.' For the first, it is granted, that there are those two contrary principles of flesh and spirit, corruption and grace, in the hearts of all, even the best and most eminent saints, whilst they continue here below. But that these two, should be principles acting themselves in their obedience, the one moved, incited, and stirred up by love, the other from the fear whereof we are speaking, is a fleshly, dark, anti-evangelical conceit. That the principle in believers which the Scripture calls flesh, and corruption, needs incitement to obedience, or is to be incited thereunto, as is affirmed, is no less corrupt than what was before mentioned. Look, whatsoever influence flesh or corruption hath into any of our obedience, so far that obedience is vitiated, corrupted, rendered unclean and unacceptable before God. The flesh is to be crucified, slain, destroyed, not stirred up, and provoked to obedience, being indeed disobedience in the abstract? enmity to God. You may as well persuade darkness to shine, as the flesh to obey; it is not a fool (as that allusion bespeaks it from Prov. xxvi. 3.) that would ever and anon be unruly,

were not a rod shaken over him; but it is folly itself, that is not to be cured, but killed, not stirred up, but mortified. How that is to be done, hath been formerly at large declared: it is by the Spirit's bringing the cross and power of the death of Christ into the heart of the sinner, and not by any consideration of hell, and punishment, that we can take upon ourselves (which never did, nor never will, mortify any sin, to the end of the world) that this work is to be wrought.

Secondly, That which is added of God's bountiful provision for the perseverance of the saints by engaging the passion of fear, as well as love, is of no better a frame or constitution than that which went before. That our gracious Father had made fuller, larger, and more certain provision for our perseverance, than any can be afforded by the engaging of our passions, by consideration of punishment or reward, I hope, hath been sufficiently demonstrated; and if Mr. Goodwin intend no more by his love, and fear of God, than the engaging of those natural passions in us, by the considerations intimated, I shall not be rival with him in his persuasion. The love we intend is a fruit of the Spirit of God in us, and the fear contended about, of the spirit of bondage: which though it be not pressed on us as our duty, yet we hope that bountiful provision is made for our perseverance, as shall effectually support and preserve us to the end. Blessed be his name, his saints have many better guardians and keepers, than a bondage frame of Spirit, upon the account of the wrath to come, from whence they are delivered by Christ: they are in his own hand, and in the hand of his Son, and are 'kept through faith by his power to salvation.' If this be the end of Mr. Goodwin's preaching the threatenings of God at any time, viz. that the natural passion of fear, being stirred up with the apprehensions of hell, the flesh that is in man, may be incited to obedience, I hope he hath not many consenting with him in the same intendment.

Thirdly, To an objection framed from 1 John iv. 18. That 'perfect love casts out fear,' he tells us; First, 'That it may be so, but whose love is perfect.' Secondly, 'That love cherisheth fear, until the flesh be quite cast out.' Thirdly, 'That the flesh would make love wanton and entice it to folly, did not fear dissolve the enchantment.' But,

First, Though love be not perfectto all degrees of per-

fection here, yet it may have, yea it hath in the saints the perfection of uprightness and sincerity, which is all that is here intended, and all that is required to it, for the casting out of that tormenting fear of which the apostle speaks. 'Fear,' saith he, 'hath torment:' and if our love cannot amount to that perfection, as to cast it out, it being only to be cast out thereby, it is impossible we should ever be freed from torment all our days, or be filled with joy and consolation in believing; which would frustrate the glorious design of God, which he hath sworn himself willing to pursue, Heb. vi. 13. and the great end of the death of Christ, which he hath perfectly accomplished, Heb. ii. 15.

Secondly, It is true; there is a fear that love cherisheth; the fear that God hath promised in the covenant of grace, to preserve in our hearts all our days; but to say it cherisheth the fear we speak of, and which the Holy Ghost in this place intendeth, is expressly to make the Holy Ghost a liar, and to contradict him to his face.

Thirdly, What love in us is that, that the flesh can or may entice to folly? Are the fruits of the Spirit of God, graces of his own working and creating in us, of such a temper and constitution, as that they may be enticed to uncleanness and folly? And is it possible that such a thought should enter into the heart of a man, professing the doctrine of the gospel? That ink should stain paper, with such filth cast upon the Spirit and grace of God? The fear of hell erewhile was suited to the use of the flesh, but now (it seems) it serves to keep the love of God itself in order, that otherwise would wax wanton, fleshly, and foolish. Foolish love, that will attempt to cast out this tormenting fear, not being able to preserve itself from folly, without its assistance.

Sect. 15. is spent in an answer endeavoured to an objection, placed in the beginning of it in these words:

'If it be farther demanded, But doth it not argue servility in men, to be drawn by the iron cord of the fear of hell, to do what is their duty to do? Or doth any other service or obedience become sons and children, but only that which is free and proceedeth from love?'

Hereunto you have a threefold answer returned.

First, 'That God requires that it should be so;' which is a downright begging of the question.

Secondly, He puts a difference between the obedience of children to their parents, and of the saints unto God; the discourse whereof discovering some mysteries of the new doctrine of grace, much pressed and insisted on, take as follows. 'There is a very different consideration of the obedience of children to their natural parents, and of the obedience of the children of God unto their heavenly Father; the obedience of the former, is but by the inspiration of nature, and is an act not so much raised by deliberation, or flowing from the will, by an interposure of judgment and conscience to produce the election, as arising from an innate propension in men, accompanying the very constituting principles of their nature and being; whereas the latter, the obedience of the children of God, is taught by precepts: and the principle of it, I mean that rational frame of heart, out of which they subject themselves to God, is planted in the souls of men by the engagement of reason, judgment, and conscience, to consider those grounds, arguments, and motives, by which their heavenly Father judgeth it meet to work and fashion them unto such a frame; so that, though the obedience of natural children to their natural parents, be the more genuine and commendable, when it flows freely from the pure instinct of nature, and is not drawn from them by fear of punishment, yet the obedience of the children of God is then most genuine and commendable, and like unto itself when it is produced and raised in the soul, by a joint influence and contribution, not of one or of some but of all those arguments, reasons, motives, inducements whatever, and how many soever they be, by which their heavenly Father useth to plant and work it in them; for in this case and in this only, it hath most of God, of the Spirit of God, of the wisdom of God, of the goodness of God: in and upon this account it is likeliest to be most free, uniform, and permanent.'

The sum of this answer amounts to these three things:

First, That there is an instinct or inspiration of nature in children to yield obedience to their parents.

Secondly, That there is no such spiritual instinct or inclination in the saints to yield obedience to God.

Thirdly, That the obedience of the saints ariseth merely and solely from such considerations of the reason of that obe-

dience, which they apprehend in contradiction to any such genuine principles as might incline their hearts thereunto.

For the first, That the obedience of children to their parents, though it be a prime dictate of the law of nature wherewith they are endued, proceedeth from a pure instinct, any otherwise than as a principle suiting and inclining them to the acts of that obedience, so as to exclude the promoting and carrying of it on, upon the moral consideration of duty, piety, &c. it is in vain for Mr. Goodwin to go about to persuade us, unless he could not only corrode the word of God where it presseth that obedience as a duty, but also charm us into beasts of the field, which are acted by such a brute instinct, not to be improved, stirred up, or drawn forth into exercise by deliberation or consideration. There is, it is true, in children an impress of the power of the law of nature, suiting them to obedience (which yet in many hath been quite cast out and obliterated, being not of the constituting principles of their nature, which whilst they have their being as such, cannot be thrown out of them), and carrying them out unto it with delight, ease, and complacency (as habits do to suitable actings), but withal that this principle is not regulated and directed as our obedience to God by a rule, and stirred up to exert itself, and they in whom it is, provoked by rational and conscientious considerations, to the performance of their duty in that obedience, is so contrary to the experience, I suppose, of all sharers with us in our mortality, that it will hardly be admitted into debate. But,

Secondly, The worst part of this story lies in the middle of it, in the exclusion of any such spiritual principle in believers, as should carry them out unto obedience, at least to any such as is not begotten in their minds by rational considerations; whatever may be granted of acquired habits of grace (which, that the first should be, that a spiritual habit should be acquired by natural actings, is a most ridiculous fiction), all infused habits of grace that should imprint upon the soul a new natural inclination to obedience, that should fashion and frame the hearts of men into a state and condition suited for, and carry them out unto, spiritual obedience, are here decried. All it seems that the Scripture hath told us of our utter insufficiency, deadness, disability, indisposedness to any thing that is good, without

a new life and principle, all that we have apprehended and believed concerning the 'new heart and Spirit given us, the new nature, new creature, divine nature, inward man, grace in the heart, making the root good that the fruit may be so;' all that the saints have expressed concerning their delight in God, love to God upon the account of his writing his laws in their hearts and spirits, is a mere delusion. There is no principle of any heavenly, spiritual life, no new nature with its bent and instinct lying towards God and obedience to him, wrought in the saints, or bestowed on them by the Holy Spirit of grace. If this be so we may even fairly shut our Bibles, and go learn this new gospel of such as are able to instruct us therein: wherefore I say,

Thirdly, That as in children there is an instinct, an inclination of nature, to induce them and carry them out to obedience to their natural parents, which yet is directed, regulated, provoked, and stirred up, and they thereby, to that obedience, by motives and considerations suited to work upon their minds and consciences, to prevail with them thereunto; so also in believers, the children of God who are 'begotten of the will of God,' of the 'word of truth,' and born again, not of the will of the flesh but of the will of God,' there is a new spiritual principle, a constituting principle of their spiritual lives wrought and implanted in them by the Spirit of God; a principle of faith, love, enabling them for, suiting them unto, and inciting them to, that obedience which is acceptable and well-pleasing to their Father which is in heaven; in which obedience, as they are regulated by the word, so they are stirred up unto it by all those motives, which the Lord in his infinite wisdom hath fitted to prevail on persons endued with such a principle from himself, as they are. It is not incumbent on me to enter upon the proof and demonstration of a title to a truth, which the saints of God have held so long in unquestionable possession, nothing at all being brought to invalidate it, but only a bare insinuation that it is not so. Then,

Fourthly, I deny not but that the saints of God are stirred up to obedience, by all the considerations and inducements which God lays before them and proposeth to them, for that end and purpose; and as he hath spread a principle of obedience over their whole souls, all their fa-

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have on them as to restraint when managed by the hand of God's grace.

Fourthly, That yet believers can never be delivered from it but by faith in the blood of Christ, attended with sincere and upright walking with God; which when they fail of, though that fear supposed to be predominant in the soul, be inconsistent with any comfortable cheering assurance of the favour of God, yet it is not with the certain continuance to them of the thing itself, upon the account of the promises of God.

Section the sixteenth contains a large discourse in answer to the apostle, affirming that fear hath torment, which is denied by our author upon sundry considerations; the fear he intends is a fear of hell, and wrath to come; this he supposeth to be of such predominancy in the soul, as to be a principle of obedience unto God; that this can be without torment, disquiet, bondage, and vexation, he will not easily evince to the consciences of them, who have at any time been exercised under such a frame; what fear is consistent with hope, what incursions upon the souls of the saints are made by dread and bondage, the fear of hell, and the use of such fears, how some are, though true believers, scarcely delivered from such fears, all their days, I have formerly declared; and that may suffice as to all our concernment in this discourse.

In the seventeenth section, somewhat is attempted as to promises, answerable to what hath been done concerning exhortations and threatenings. The words used to this end are many; the sum is, that the use of promises in stirring men up to obedience, is solely in the proposal of a good thing, or good things to them to whom the promises are made, which they may attain, or come short of. Now if men are assured, as this doctrine supposeth they may be, that they shall attain the end, whether they use the means or no, how can they possibly be incited by the promises to the use of means proposed for the enjoyment of the end promised: that this is the substance of his discourse, I presume himself will confess, and it being the winding up of a tedious argument, I shall briefly manifest its usefulness, and lay it aside. I say then,

First, What is the true use of the promises of God, and

what influence they have into the obedience and holiness of the saints, hath been formerly declared. Neither is any thing there asserted, of their genuine and natural tendency to the ends expressed, enervated in the least by any thing here insisted on, or intimated by Mr. Goodwin; so that without more trouble I might refer the reader thither to evince the falseness of Mr. Goodwin's assertions, concerning the uselessness of the promises unto perseverance, upon a supposition that there are promises of perseverance.

Secondly, Though we affirm that all true saints shall persevere, yet we do not say, that all that are so, do know themselves to be so; and towards them at least the promises may have their efficacy in that way, which Mr. Goodwin hath by his authority confined them to work in.

Thirdly, We say that our Saviour was fully persuaded, that in the issue of his undertakings and sufferings, he should be 'glorified with his Father,' according to his promise: and yet upon the account of that glory which he was so assured of, being set before him, he addressed himself to the sharpest and most difficult passage to it, that ever any one entered on; 'He endured the cross, despised the shame, for the glory's sake,' whereof he had assurance; Heb. xii. And why may not this be the state of them to whom in his so doing he was a captain of salvation? Why may not the glory and reward set before them, though enjoyed in a full assurance of faith, in the excellency of it, when possessed, as promised, stir them up to the means leading thereunto.

Fourthly, The truth is, the more we are assured with the assurance of faith (not of presumption), that we shall certainly obtain and enjoy the end whereunto the means we use do lead (as is the assurance that ariseth from the promises of God), the more eminently are we pressed in a gospel way, if we walk in the spirit of the gospel, to give up ourselves to obedience to that God and Father, who hath appointed so precious and lovely means, as are the paths of grace, for the obtaining of so glorious an end as that whereunto we are appointed. And thus I doubt not but that it is manifest, by these considerations of Mr. Goodwin's objections to the contrary, that the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, as by us taught and delivered, doth not only fall in a sweet compliance with all the means of grace, especially those ap-

pointed by God to establish the saints in faith and obedience, that is, to work perseverance in them, but also to be eminently useful to give life, vigour, power, and efficacy, in a peculiar gospel manner, to all exhortations, threatenings, and promises appointed and applied by God, to that end and purpose.

CHAP. XIII.

The maintainers and propagators of the several doctrines under contest, taken into consideration. The necessity of so doing from Mr. G. undertaking to make the comparison. This inquiry confined to those of our own nation. The chief assertors of this doctrine of the saints' perseverance in this nation since it received any opposition, what was their ministry, and what their lives. Mr. G.'s plea in this case. The first objection against his doctrine by him proposed, second, and third. His answers to these objections considered: removed. His own word and testimony offered against the experience of thousands. The persons pointed to by him, and commended, considered. The principles of those persons he opposeth, vindicated. Of the doctrine of the primitive Christians, as to this head of religion. Grounds of mistake in reference to their judgments. The first reformers constant to themselves in their doctrine of the saints' perseverance. Of the influence of Mr. Perkins's judgment on the propagation of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance. Who the persons were on whom his judgment is supposed to have such an influence. The consent of foreign churches making void this surmise. What influence the doctrine of the saints' perseverance had into the holiness of its professors. Of the unworthiness of the persons who in this nation have asserted the doctrine of apostacy: the suitableness of this doctrine to their practices. Mr. G.'s attempt to take off this charge. How far men's doctrines may be judged by their lives. Mr. G.'s reasons why episcopalists arminianised, the first. Considered and disproved. His discord, &c. General apostacy of men entertaining the Arminian tenets. The close.

As to the matter in hand, about the usefulness of the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, in and unto the ministry of the gospel, and the obstruction pretended to be laid unto it thereby, it may be somewhat conducing and of concernment to consider who the persons are and were, and what hath been and is the presence of God with them, in their ministry who have been assertors and zealous maintainers of this doctrine: and withal who they were, and what they have been in their ministry, and the dispensation of the word committed unto them, who have risen up in opposition

confine myself to those of our own nation, who have been of renown in their generation for their labour in the Lord, and of name among the saints for their work in the service of the gospel.

For the one half of that small space of time, which is passed since the breaking forth of the light of the gospel in this nation, we are disenabled from pursuing the comparison instituted: the one part being not to be considered, or at least not being considerable. The time when first head was made against the truth we profess, and criminations like those managed by Mr. Goodwin hatched and contrived to assault it withal, was, when it had been eminently delivered to the saints of this nation, and all the churches of Christ, by Reynolds, Whitakers, Greenham, and others like to them, their fellow-labourers in the Lord's vineyard. The poor weak worms of this present generation, who embrace the same doctrine with these men of name, are thought to be free (some of them at least) from being destroyed by the poisonous and pernicious embracing of it, by their own weakness and disability to discern the natural genuine consequences and tendency, in the progress of that, which in the root and foundation they embrace. Their ignorance of their own doctrine in its compass and extent, is the mother of that devotion, which in them is nourished thereby. So our great masters tell us, against whose kingly authority in these things there is no rising up. For the persons formerly named, the like relief cannot be supposed. He that shall provide an apology for them, affirming that they understood not the state, nature, consequences, and tendencies of the doctrines they received, defended, preached, contended for, will scarce be able by any following defensative, to vindicate his own credit for so doing. In the lives, then, and the ministry of those men, and such as those, if any where, are the fruits of this doctrine to be seen. If it corrupted not their lives, nor weakened their ministry; if it turned not them aside from the paths of gospel obedience, nor weakened their hands in the dispensation of the word, in the promises, threatenings, and exhortations thereof, to the conversion of souls and building up of those who by their ministry were called, in their most holy faith, it cannot but be a strong presumption that there is no such venomous infectious quality in this

doctrine, as of late some chemical divines pretend themselves to be able to extract out of it. Now, what I pray, were these men? What were their lives? What was their ministry? All those who now oppose Mr. Goodwin's doctrine, do it either out of ignorance, or to comply with greatness, and men in authority, thereby to make up themselves in their ambitious and worldly aims, and to prevail themselves upon the opinion of men: for what cause else in the world can be imagined why they should so engage? What though they really believed the whole fabric of his doctrine wherein he hath departed from the faith he once (as they say) professed to be a lie; a lie of dangerous and pernicious consequence to the souls of men, a lie derogatory to the glory of God, the efficacy of grace, the merit of the death of Christ, and the honour of the gospel, and full of disconsolation to poor souls, being in and under temptation. What though they suppose it secretly to undermine the main fundamentals of the covenant of grace, and covertly to substitute another covenant in the room thereof? What though they have observed that the doctrine they have received, was embraced, preached, prized, by all those great and blessed souls, which, in the last generation, God magnified with the conversion of so many thousands in this nation, given into their ministry, whilst they spent their days under continual afflictions and persecutions? What though they have the general known consent of all the reformed churches beyond the seas with them, in their zeal for the doctrine under consideration? What though, under these and the like apprehensions, they profess in the presence of God, his holy angels and men, that the eternal interest of the precious souls of men, is more valuable to them ten thousand times than their own lives, and that that is the sole reason of their opposition to Mr. G. in his attempts against the doctrine they have so received and embraced, yet it is meet for us to judge, and for all 'to whom evil surmises are not esteemed to be among the works of the flesh,' that all their opposition, is nothing but a compliance with and pursuit of those worldly, low, and wretched aims, that they are filled withal. But as to those persons before-mentioned, what shall we say? Their piety, literature, zeal, diligence, industry, labour with success in the work of the ministry (and that under manifold

discouragements), are so renowned in the world, that how or wherewith they shall be shifted off, from being considerable in their testimony, I cannot imagine. If ever persons in these latter ages had written upon their breasts, 'Holiness to the Lord,' if ever any bare about, a 'conformity to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ;' they may put in for an eminent esteem and name among them; and will doubtless be found at last to be of the thirty, if they attain not to the first rank of the worthies of Christ, in these ends of the world. How is it that they were not retarded, in the course of their gospel obedience, by their entertainment of this wretched doctrine of the saints' perseverance? But what though they kept themselves personally from the pollution of it, yet possibly their ministry was defiled and rendered useless by it. And who, I pray, is it, that in this generation can so support himself with success in the ministry, as to rise up with this accusation against them? Many thousands who were their crown, their glory, and rejoicing in Christ, are fallen asleep, and some continue to this day. Of the reasons given by Mr. Goodwin why all the zealous, fruitful preachers, of former days, embraced this doctrine, we shall instantly undertake the consideration. In the mean time this seems strange, that God should magnify and make famous the ministry of so many, throughout the world, and give in that visible blessing to their labours therein, which hath filled this island with such an increase of children to Sion, as that she hath not lengthened the cords of her tabernacle, to such an extent and compass, in any proportionable spot of earth under heaven, if any one eminent part of their doctrine, and that whereon they laid great weight in their ministry, which they pressed with as much fervency and contention of spirit as any head of the like importance, should indeed be so apparently destructive of holiness, and of such a direct and irresistible efficiency to render useless that great ordinance of the ministry committed to them, as this is clamoured to be. What will be the success of them, in their ministry, who shall undertake to deny and oppose it, I hope the people of God in this nation, will not have many instances to judge by. The best conjecture we can for the present make of what will be hereafter, must be taken from what hath already come to pass; and the best guess of

what events will be, is to be raised from the consideration of what hath been; from a like disposition of causes, to an answerableness of events.

What Mr. Goodwin hath to plead in this case he insists on, chap. 9. sect. 24—27. pp. 167—172. The sum and aim of his discourse, is, to apologise for his doctrine against sundry objections, which in the observations of men it is liable and obnoxious unto. Now these are such as whatever the issue of their consideration prove, doubtless it can be of no advantage unto his cause, that his doctrine is so readily exposed to them.

The first of these is, that the doctrine he opposeth, and in opposition whereunto that is set up, which he so industriously asserts, hath generally been received and embraced by men eminent in piety and godliness, famous on that account in their generations, with the generality of the people of God with them. And this is attended with that which naturally ensues thereon, viz. The scandalousness of the most of them (yea, of them all of this nation is it spoken), who have formerly asserted the doctrine which Mr. Goodwin hath lately espoused. Whereunto, in the third place, an observation is subjoined, of the 'ordinary defection of men to loose and unsavoury practices, after they have once drank in the principles of that opinion, which he now so industriously mixeth and tempereth for them.' It is usually said there is no smoke, but where there is some fire; it would be strange if such observations as these, should be readily and generally made by men, concerning the doctrine under contest, unless there were some evident occasion administered by it thereunto. And I must needs say, that if they prove true, and hold under examination, they will become as urging a prejudice, as can lightly be laid against any cause in religion whatsoever. The gospel being a doctrine according unto godliness, several persuasions pretending to be parts and portions thereof, if one shall be found to be the constant faith and profession of those, who also have the life and power of godliness in them; the other to be maintained by evil men and seducers, who, upon their receiving it, do also wax worse and worse; it is no small advantage to the first, in its plea for admittance to the right and title of a truth of the gospel.

this charge Mr. Goodwin premises this in

erience asserted in the objection, is not so un- in point of truth, but that if the asserters were pon the proof, they would, I fear (doubtless he it), account, more in presumption than in rea- of argument. For if persons of the one judg- f the other, were duly compared together, I verily re would be found every whit as full a proportion ly conscientious and religious, amongst those gments stand, and have stood for a possibility of ay, as on the other side: but through a foolish and kind of partiality, we are apt, on all hands, ac- o the proverb, to account our own geese for swans, men's swans geese. Certain I am, that if the writ- men of the one judgment and of the other, be com- gether, and an estimate made from thence of the , worth, and holiness of the authors respectively, ho oppose the common doctrine of perseverance, do it no robbery to make themselves every way equal honour with their opposers. The truth is, if it be for me to utter what I really apprehend, and judge in ase, I do not find that spirit of holiness, to breathe with authority, height, or excellency of power, in the writings e latter, which I am very sensible of in the writings of former. These call for righteousness, holiness, and all nner of Christian conversation, with every whit as high and as the other, and add nothing to check, obstruct, or feeble the authority of their demands in this kind; when the other, though they be sore many times in their exhor- tations and conjurements unto holiness; yet other while elder both these and themselves in them contemptible, by avouching such principles, which cut the very sinews and strength of such their exhortations, and fully balance all the weight of those motives, by which they seek to bind upon the consciences of men. And for men truly holy conscientious, doubtless the primitive Christians for e hundred years together and upwards, next after the s of the apostles, will fully balance with an abundant plusage, both for numbers and truth of godliness, all those in the reformed churches; who since Calvin's days,

have adhered to the common doctrine of perseverance. And that the churches of Christ more generally during the said space of three hundred years and more, held a possibility of a total and final defection, even in true and sound believers, is so clear from the records yet extant of those times, that it cannot be denied.'

Ans. To let pass Mr. Goodwin's proverb, with its application (it being very facile to return it to its author, there being nothing in the world by him proposed to induce us to such an estimation of his associates, in the work of teaching the doctrine of the saints' apostacy, and their labours therein, or any other undertaking of theirs, as he labours to beget, in gilding over their worth and writings, but only his own judgment and an overweening of their geese for swans), let us see what is offered by him to evince the experience asserted, not to be so unquestionable as is pretended. He offers, first, his own affirmation, 'That if an estimate may be made of men's worth and holiness by their writings, those who oppose the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, will be found, in the promotion of holiness and practice of it, to outgo their adversaries.' 'Their writings,' he tells us, 'breathe forth a spirit of holiness, such as he cannot find in the writings of others.' But, first, for this you have only Mr. Goodwin's naked single testimony; and that, opposed to the common experience of the people of God. What weight this is like to bear with men, the event will shew. It is a hard thing for one man, upon his bare word, to undertake to persuade a multitude, that what their eyes see, and their ears hear, is not so; Mr. Goodwin had need have Pythagorean disciples for the embracing of these dictates of his. The experience of thousands is placed to confirm the observation insisted on: saith Mr. Goodwin, 'It is not so, they are in my judgment all deceived.' But,

Secondly, Who are they in whose writings Mr. Goodwin hath found such a spirit of holiness, 'breathing with authority, as is not to be found out, nor perceived, in the writings of them, that assert the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints?' Calvin, Zanchius, Beza, &c. and (to confine ourselves to home) Reynolds, Whitaker, Perkins, Greenham, Dodd, Preston, Boulton, Sibbs, Rogers, Culverwell, Cotton, &c. (whose fame, upon this very account, of the eminent

and effectual breathing of a spirit of holiness in their writings, is gone out into all the nations about us, and their remembrance is blessed at home and abroad), are some of the men who have, as hath been shewed, laboured in watering the vineyard of the Lord, with the dew and rain of this doctrine. Who, or where, are they who have excelled them in this undertaking? Let the men be named, and the writings produced, that Mr. Goodwin may have some joined with him, in a search after, and judgment of, that spirit that breathes so excellently in them, that we be not forced to take his testimony of we know not what nor whom. Those amongst ourselves of chiefest name, who have appeared in the cause that Mr. Goodwin hath now undertaken, are Tompson, Montague, &c. with an obscure rabble of that generation. I shall easily allow Mr. Goodwin to be a man more sharp-sighted than the most of those with whom he hath to do, in this present contest; as also to have his senses more exercised, in the writings of those eminent persons last named. But yet that he is sensible of such a spirit of holiness, breathing in their writings (which for the most part are stuffed with cruel scoffings at the professors of it, and horrible contempt of all close walking with God), I cannot easily and readily believe; should he add to them Arminius, with all that followed him, in the Low Countries, their most learned Corvinus, drunk and sober; as also such among the Papists and Lutherans as are his companions in this work, and swell them all with the rhetoric of his commendations until they break, I dare say he will never be able, before indifferent judges, to make out his assertion of the excellency of their writings, for the furtherance of holiness, compared with the labours of those great and holy souls, who have, both among ourselves and abroad, laboured in the work I am at present engaged in. The world of men professing the reformed religion have long since in their judgments determined this difference, nor doth it deserve any farther debate.

Secondly, 'That those who maintain that perseverance of the saints, are sore indeed in their exhortations to holiness, but contemptible in their principles upon which they should build those exhortations,' is an insinuation that Mr. Goodwin sometimes makes use of, handsomely to beg the thing in question, when he despairs to carry it by any con-

vincing argument in a fair dispute. That the principles of this doctrine are eminently serviceable to the furtherance and promotion of holiness, hath been formerly evinced beyond all possibility of contradiction from them, who in any measure understand what true godliness is, and wherein it doth consist. Neither ought Mr. Goodwin, if he would be esteemed as a man disputing for his persuasion, so often to beg the thing in question: knowing full well that he hath not so deserved of them with whom he hath to do, as to obtain any thing of this nature, on those terms, at their hands.

Thirdly, What was the judgment of the primitive Christians, as in others, so in and about this head of Christian religion, is best known from that rule of doctrine, which it is confessed they attended unto, being delivered unto them; and in the defence whereof, and to give testimony whereto, so many thousands of them 'loved not their lives unto death.' Of those that committed over to posterity any thing of their thoughts in that space of time limited by Mr. Goodwin (viz. three hundred years), he names but two; of whom I shall not say, that if they failed in their apprehensions of the truth in this matter, it is not the only thing wherein they so failed: and yet that it can be evident in the least, that they were consenting in judgment with Mr. Goodwin, wherewith from us he differs, is absolutely denied. This elsewhere is already farther considered. It is a common observation, and not destitute of a great evidence of truth, that the liberty of expression which is used by men in the delivery of any doctrine, especially if it be done *obiter*, by the way, before some opposition hath been framed and stated thereunto, hath given advantage to those following of them (when death hath prevented all possibility for them to explain themselves, and their own thoughts) to draw them into a participation with them, in that which their souls abhorred. The plea of Arius and his associates, concerning the judgment of the doctors of the church, in the days before him, about the great article of our faith, the Deity of Christ, is known. That there are in many of the ancients, sundry expressions seemingly varying from that doctrine we assert, upon the account of their different apprehensions of the terms of faith, being 'regenerated,' 'holiness,' and the like (which are all of them still with

us, as in the Scripture, of various significations, and not clearly expressive of any one sense intended by them, until distinguished), is not denied. Speaking of all those who had been baptized, and made profession of their faith as believers, it is no wonder if they granted that some believers might fall away. But yet in the mean time the most eminent of them constantly affirmed, that there is a sort of believers, who, upon the matter with them, were the only true and real believers (being such as we formerly described) that could not fall either totally or finally; but as for this, I hope full satisfaction is tendered the learned reader in the preface of this discourse. So that these exceptions notwithstanding, the prejudices that Mr. Goodwin's doctrine labours under, from the opposition made to it, and against it, in the defence of that which it riseth up to overthrow, by that generation of the saints of God, lies upon the shoulders thereof, as a burden too heavy for it to bear.

Secondly, Mr. Goodwin farther proceeds, sect. 27. to inform us of some other mistakes in the instance given, to make good the former observation. For as for Calvin, Musculus, Martyr, Bucer, with the ministers of this nation, who, in the last generation, so zealously opposed the persecutions and innovations of some returning with speed and violence to Rome, he tells us 'they were very far from having their judgments settled, as to the doctrine under contest, so as resolvedly to have embraced the one, and rejected the other.'

I should willingly walk in the high way for the manifestation and clear eviction of the untruth of this suggestion: viz. by producing their testimonies in abundant plentiful manner, to confirm their clearness and resolution in the truth we profess, with their zealous endeavours for the establishment, confirmation, and propagation of it, but that some few considerations delivered me from engaging in so facile a task. For,

First, I am not able to persuade myself, that any man who ever read the writings of the first sort of men mentioned, and knows the constant doctrine, to this day, of the churches which they planted and watered, or ever did hear of the latter, will entertain this assertion of Mr. Goodwin's with any thing but admiration upon what grounds he should make it. And,

Secondly, Himself discovering in part on what account he doth it, namely, because of their exhortations to watchfulness, carefulness, and close walking with God, with their denunciations of threatenings to them that abide not in the faith, which he fancies to be inconsistent with the doctrine of perseverance, so as by him opposed (which inconsistency we have long since fully manifested to be the issue and offspring of his own imagination, begotten of it by the cunning sophistry of his Pelagian friends), I know not why I should farther insist upon the wiping away of this reproach, cast upon those blessed souls whom God so magnified in the work of the gospel of his Son in their generation. I remember Navaret, a Dominican friar, upon his observation of the subtilties of the Jesuits, to wrest many sayings of the ancients in favour of their opinions, in those doctrines wherein those two orders are at variance, affirms, 'that he was afraid that when he was dead, although he had written and disputed so much against them, they would produce him for a testimony and witness on their side.' What he feared concerning himself, Mr. Goodwin hath attempted, concerning many more worthy persons: cutting off sentences from what goes before, and follows after, restraining general expressions, imposing his own hypothesis on his reader, in making application of what he quotes out of any author, he hath spent one whole chapter to persuade the world, that men of as great abilities and judgments as any in the world since the apostles fell asleep, have usually expressed themselves in a direct contradiction, to what they are eminently and notoriously known, as their professed deliberate judgments, to have maintained.

Secondly, He farther informs us, how this doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, came to be so generally entertained by the godly, zealous, and able ministers of this nation, that when we see how they fell into it, their testimony given thereto, may be of less validity with us.

'This,' he telleth you, 'was the permission of Mr. Perkins's judgment, to be overruled by the texts of Scripture commonly insisted on for the proof of this doctrine: the great worth of the person commended therefore the worth of the opinion, and he verily believeth, as men were then induced to receive this opinion, so, to a relinquishment of

it, they want nothing but the countenance and authority of some person of popular acceptance to go before them. And the reason he giveth of this his faith is, the observation of the principles they usually hold forth, especially in the applicatory part of their sermons.'

Ans. What and who they were, who are thus represented by Mr. Goodwin, in their receiving and embracing of that doctrine, which with the great travail of their souls all their days they preached, and pressed to and upon others, is known to all. The persons I named before (one of them only excepted) with all those eminent burning, and shining lights, which for so many years have laboured, with renown and success, to the astonishment of the world, in the preaching of the gospel in this nation, are the men intended. Doubtless such thoughts have not in former days been entertained of them, however the contemplation of any man's own ability may now raise him to contempt of them. Mr. Perkins received this doctrine, and therefore all the godly ministers of this nation did so to. If any one of the like esteem with him did fall off from it (now whom they should obtain to lead them, of equal reputation and acceptance with him who hath in vain attempted it, I know not), they would quickly follow (not like shepherds, but sheep) into an opposition thereunto. Those who have not very slight thoughts of them, which doubtless they that are fallen asleep did not deserve, will scarcely suppose that they entertained a truth of so great importance as this upon so easy terms as these insinuated; or that they would have parted with it at so cheap a rate.

Farther, Why the ministers of England should be thought to entertain this doctrine merely upon the authority and countenance of Mr. Perkins given thereunto, when the universality of the teachers of all other reformed churches, of the same confession in other things with them, did also embrace the same doctrine, and do continue in profession of it to this day, what reason can be assigned? Had there been a particular inducement to the ministers of England for the receiving of it, which was altogether foreign unto them, who as to our nation are foreigners, whence is it that there should be such a coincidence of their judgments with them therein? Or why may not ours be thought to take it upon

the same account with them, upon whose judgments and understandings the authority of Mr. Perkins cannot be supposed to have any influence? Is Mr. G. the only person, who in this nation hath impartially weighed all things of concernment, to the refusing or embracing any matters or doctrines in religion? Have no other, in the sincerity of their hearts, searched the Scriptures, and earnestly begged the guidance of the Spirit, according to that encouraging promise left by their Master, that they should receive him so doing? The good Lord take away from us all high thoughts of ourselves, and all contempt of them that profess the fear of the Lord, with whom we have to do. For the reason of Mr. Goodwin's faith in this thing, concerning the readiness of the godly ministers of this nation, to apostatize from the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, namely, their manifesting themselves to be possessed of many principles of a contrary tendency unto it, in the applicatory parts of their sermons, the vanity of it hath been long since discovered; so that there is no farther need to lay open the unreasonableness thereof.

Mr. Goodwin, mistrusting his ability to persuade men, that the persons of whom he hath discoursed were not clear in their judgments, as to an opposition to that doctrine which he positively owneth, and zealously contendeth for; and knowing that it cannot be denied but that they were men of eminency for godliness, and close walking in communion with God all their days: yet he excepteth, as his last refuge, 'That it cannot be manifested, that this opinion had the least influence in their pious conversation, which is wholly to be ascribed to other commendable principles that they embraced.' This indeed may be said of any part of the doctrine whatsoever that they received, and some of them suffered for. Atheists may say it, of the whole profession of Christianity, and ascribe the goodness of the lives of the best of them that profess it, to some other principles common to them with the residue of mankind, and not at all to any of those whereby they are distinguished, as such. This they professed to have a powerful efficacy to prevail with them for that exactness in walking with God, which by his grace they attained unto. And why they should not be believed herein, as far as any men whatever, bearing the

like testimony to any doctrine whatever, I know not. Besides, the intendment of this instance of the persons and their piety who formerly believed and spake forth this doctrine, was, to manifest, by an eminent experiment, that there was not in it, nor is, any tendency to a contrary frame unto piety and holiness, which it is injuriously charged withal; and if by the consideration thereof, we do not obtain that it hath a proper and direct serviceableness to the promotion of godliness, yet at least we have a convincing demonstration that it is no way obstructive to it.

Nextly, sect. 26. Mr. Goodwin entereth upon his defensative to the charge against his doctrine, whose foundation is laid in the unworthiness of its authors in this nation before it fell upon his hand. These he confesseth to be the worst of our late bishops, with such as Romanized, and tyrannized among them, with their clergy creatures and favourites, persons many of them of superstition, looseness, and much profaneness. Of the apology shaped for the clearing of the doctrine he maintaineth from a participation with them in their unworthiness, there are three parts. In the first whereof, he denieth, that this doctrine did any way induce them to the looseness that was found upon them; in the other two, giveth as many reasons of their receiving of it, and cleaving to it.

As for the first part, I shall willingly assent to him that the holiness or unholiness of professors, is not to be charged on the religion they profess (I mean appearing holiness in the profession of it), unless there be an evidence of a connexion betwixt their principles and practices; which in this case, to us and our apprehension of them who charge this doctrine with the miscarriages of those men, there is: at least we may insist on this, that there is a suitableness in the whole system of the doctrine, whereof the apostacy of the saints is an eminent parcel, to that frame of spirit which is in men of loose and superstitious ways, enemies of the grace of God and power of godliness. Neither can there any other reason be tolerably assigned or alleged, for the embracement of that doctrine, by those persons formerly mentioned, but only their ignorance of, and envy to, the great mysteries of the gospel, the covenant of grace, with union, communion, and close walking with God. A design

was upon them written with the beams of the sun, to cry up a barren, outside, light, and loose profession, with a vain, superstitious, self-invented worship of God, instead of the power of a gospel-conversation and ordinances of Christ according to his appointment. 'Seeking after a righteousness as it were by the works of the law, and being ignorant of the righteousness of Christ,' they found the whole doctrine whose defence Mr. G. hath lately undertaken, suited to their principles and aims; and therefore with greediness drank it down like water, until they were swelled with the dropsy of pride and self-conceit, beyond what they could bear. Whatever be now pretended, it was little disputed then, and in those days which Mr. Goodwin pointeth unto, but that looseness of life, inclination to popery, enmity to the power of godliness, were at the bottom of the entertainment of the Arminian principles, by that generation of men.

But Mr. G. proceedeth to alleviate this charge, and informs us thus, 'That if the soundness and rottenness of opinions, should be esteemed by the goodness or badness of the lives of any parcel or number of persons professing the same, as well the opinion of atheism, which denieth the being of any God, as the opinion of polytheism, which affirmeth a plurality of gods, must be esteemed better and more sound, than that which maintaineth the being of one God and of one only; for certain it is, that there have been many heathens professors some of the one, and some of the other of those opinions, who have quitted themselves upon fairer terms of honour and approbation in their lives than many Christians, professing of the last opinion, have done.'

I am not willing to wring this nose too far, lest blood should follow; the lives of many atheists and pagans are preferred before the lives of many professing Christianity. By 'professors of Christianity,' Mr. Goodwin intendeth those who are so indeed, and seasoned with the power of the principles of that religion, or such only as, making an outward profession of it, are indeed acted with principles quite of another nature, which, notwithstanding all their profession, rendereth them, in the truth of the thing itself, 'enemies of the cross of Christ, their god being their belly, their glory being in their shame, and their end being destruction;' Philip. iii. 18, 19. If the former be intended, as the asser-

t false, the gospel only effectually 'teaching
y all ungodliness, and to live soberly, righte-
godly in this present world,' so it tendeth di-
he highest derogation from the honour of our
Christ, and of his glorious gospel. He that
thoroughly acquainted with the notorious untruth
insuation, let him a little consult Tertullian, Ar-
ctantius, Austin, and others, handling the lives
ersations of the best of the polytheists and hea-
fore and in their days, if he be not contented to
orter course, and rest in the authority of the apo-
ther of the Holy Ghost, describing them and their
ions to the life, as they lay under the just hard-
dgments of God; Rom. i. 18. to the end. If the
t of men called Christians be intended, the compa-
tituted between them and atheists, is to no pur-
ey themselves being disclaimed and disowned by
nd his gospel, and reckoned among them with whom
compared; so that, upon the matter, this is but the
ng one sort of atheists with another, and giving in
ent, that of all, those are worst, whose practices
nd yet pacify their own consciences, and deceive the
with a pretence and flourish of a glorious profession.
ll not now enter upon any long inquiry what influ-
he ungodly and profane lives of any ought to have
he judgments of men, in discovering and discerning
doctrines that they bring, especially if such as con-
n any doctrine, do also concur in a dissoluteness of
ersation. That it will be of no small consideration, the
rience of all ages hath evinced. The Athenians re-
ed a virtuous law, because the person was vicious who
posed it; and it is generally esteemed that there is a
rrespondency betwixt the principles and practices of
ose men, who earnestly profess the promotion of those
rinciples, so that they are mutual producers or advantagers
ne of another. This is all at present that was aimed at in
he charge upon Mr. Goodwin's doctrine, which he under-
kes to wave. It was generally embraced at its first broach-
n our world, by men only of a loose and scandalous
ation, superstitious in their ways of worship, and
of the power of godliness; which being confessed,
rgument from thence, 'valeat quantum valere potest.'

But Mr. Goodwin giveth us two reasons, why this doctrine of his was so gladly received, and zealously asserted by that generation of men. The first which he telleth you is plain and easy to be given in, is this: 'Being professed enemies to the most religious and zealous preachers and ministers of the land, with their adherents, whom they termed puritans, whom they both hated and feared, as a generation of men, by whom, rather than any other, they apprehended themselves in danger of being dethroned, 'Nec eos fefellit Opinio.' Upon this ground they judged it a very material point of their interest to oppose and keep under this faction, as they termed them; in order thereunto they studied and cast about how to weaken their interest and repute, with the generality of the people, or at least with all those that were intelligent, and in that respect considerable; to this end wisely considering, that nothing was like to prejudice them more in their esteem with most men, than to detect them of error and unsoundness in their doctrine, and perceiving withal (as with half an eye they might, being so fully disengaged as they were from all high thoughts of those that held them) that they were not in any doctrine besides which they were generally known to hold and teach, more obnoxious to such a detection, than in those which they held and taught in opposition to the remonstrants. Hereupon they politically fell to profess and teach remonstrantism, that so they might have the more frequent occasion and opportunity to lay open the puritan doctrine before the people, and to shew the inconsistency of it with the Scriptures, as also with many of the most manifest principles as well of reason as religion besides.'

Ans. That this is a most vain and groundless conjecture, I presume any one that will but cast back his thoughts upon the posture of affairs during the reign of that generation of men, and a little consider the ways and means whereby they were, through the righteous hand of God, reduced to that condition and state wherein they now are, will quickly determine. The truth is, they were so far from advantaging themselves against their adversaries, and prevailing upon them, in the esteem of the most rational and knowing men in the nation, by their entertaining the Arminian doctrine, that utterly, on the other side, they dishonoured their cause of ceremonies, discipline, and conformity, which

with success they had so long carried on with the generality of the nation, and exposed themselves to the power of the people of the land in parliament, from whence, as to all other differences, they were sheltered by an appearance of legal constitutions; so that after some forward person of that faction (the most contemptible indeed as to any real worth, one or two individuals only excepted, of the whole tribe) had, upon the grounds fore-mentioned, taken up and made profession of the opinions and doctrine we are speaking of, they fell daily before their adversaries, as to the esteem of all, or at least the greatest part of those who cordially and thoroughly adhered to them as to the discipline and worship then established. Certainly the prelatical party themselves will not say, they prevailed on that hand, as to any ends and purposes for the establishment of their interest, or making good their ground against their opposers. Nay, the most sober and learned of that sort of men do, to this day, ascribe, in no small measure, the downfal of the whole fabric whereof they were parts and members, to the precipitating rashness and folly of some few, in advancing and pressing the Arminian errors that they themselves were given up unto. As for the zealous and godly ministers of the nation, usually termed Puritans (who are here acknowledged by Mr. Goodwin to have all generally opposed the doctrine he striveth to build up), though they had in many parliaments, wherein the most intelligent and rational men of the nation are usually convened, made by their friends sundry attempts for their relief against the persecutions of the other, as is evidenced by their petitions and addresses still on record, yet were never able to attain the least redress of their grievances, nor to get one step of ground against their adversaries, until the advantage of their Arminianism was administered unto them, on which by several degrees they prevailed themselves in the issue to the utter breaking of the yoke of their task-masters. It is true, he who 'takes the crafty in their own imaginations, and mixeth the counsel of the wise with madness and folly, causing them to err in their ways as a drunken man in his vomit,' doth oftentimes turn the devices of men upon their own heads, and make those things subservient to their ruin, which they fixed upon as the most expedient mediums for

their establishment and continuance; such perhaps was the case with them in their canonical oath attempted to be imposed in one of their last convocations. But that the taking up and asserting of the Arminian doctrine was a design of that party of men, to get upon the judgments and affections of the people, and to expose the puritanical preachers to their contempt and reproach, is an imagination that cannot likely fall upon any one, who had his eyes open in the days wherein those things were publicly acted on the stage of this nation. For that insinuation in the close of Mr. Goodwin's discourse, concerning the advantages given that sort of men, by the inconsistency of the doctrine of the puritans (which they opposed) with the principles of religion and reason, I shall only say, that, it being once more through the providence of God called forth to a public debate, it neither standeth nor falleth to the judgment of any single man, much less of one who is professedly engaged in an opposition thereunto.

Another reason of the same evidence with the former, is tendered in these words: 'It is generally known that the cathedral generation of men throughout Christendom, were generally great admirers of the old learning (as some call it), I mean the writings and tenets of the fathers, and of Austin more especially, and that they frequently made shield and buckler of their authority to defend themselves against the pens and opinions of later writers, whom their manner was, according to the exigency of their interest (at least as they conceived), to slight and vilify in comparison of the other. Now the judgment of the fathers more generally, and of Austin more particularly, stood for the possibility of the saints' defection, both total and final, wherein it seemeth the greater part of our modern reformed divines have departed from them.'

That this pretence is no whit better than that before, will be evidenced by the light of this one consideration, viz. That those among the bishops and their adherents, who were indeed most zealous of, and best versed in, the writings of the fathers, were generally of the same judgment about the grace of Christ and the will of man, &c. with the residue of the reformed churches, and the puritan preachers of our own nation. They were a company of sciolists in comparison,

and men of nothing, who arminianized: men, as the bishop of Lincoln once told them, whose 'learning lay in a few unlearned liturgies.' It is true, they had gotten to such a head and to such a height, not long before their fall, that they were ready to accuse and charge their associates as to discipline, worship, and ceremony of Puritanism, who failed not to retort Arminianism and popery back again to them. We know who said of the other, that they were 'tantum non in episcopatu Puritani;' and who returned to him and his associates, 'Tantum non uxoratu Pontificii.' The truth is, those among them, as there were many among them, both bishops and men (as they speak and think) of inferior orders, who were solidly learned, especially in the writings of the ancients (of whom many are yet alive, and some are fallen asleep), were universally, almost to a man, of the same judgment with Calvin, in the heads of our religion under consideration. Jewell, Abbot, Morton, Usher, Hall, Davenant, and Prideaux (great names among the world of learned men), with a considerable retinue of men of repute for literature and devotion (with whom on no account whatever the arminianizing party of the prelates and their followers are to be named the same day), have sufficiently testified their thoughts in this matter to all the world. From what ambiguity of expression it is, that any sentence is stolen from Austin, and others of the ancients, seeming to countenance the doctrine of the saints' apostacy, hath been elsewhere discovered, and may farther be manifested as occasion shall be administered. And without pretence to any great skill in the old learning, this I dare assert (whereof I have given some account in the preface to the reader), that not one of the ancients (much less Austin) did ever maintain such an apostacy of saints, and such a perseverance, as that which Mr. Goodwin contendeth for.

This being that which Mr. Goodwin hath to offer for the clearing of the doctrine he maintaineth, from the two first parts of the charge exhibited against it, he applieth himself, in the last place, to contend with a common observation made by Christians, weighing and pondering the principles and ways of men in the days wherein we live; namely, the 'degeneracy of the most of men, who at any time embrace it, from their former profession, and their turning aside to the

paths of looseness and folly.' An observation which, if true (though Mr. Goodwin is pleased to assert, that any considering man, like himself, will laugh it to scorn), will not easily be digested in the thoughts of them, that are willing to weigh aright the usual presence of God with his truths, especially at the first embracement and entertainment of them. Neither will this observation be diverted from pursuing the doctrine against which it is lifted up, by comparing it with that of 'the unhappiness of marriages made between cousin-germans,' there being nothing in that relation, that should be a disposing cause, to any such issue as is pretended; much less with that farther observation, that some 'apostatize from the Protestant religion, yea, from Christianity itself;' there being not the least parity, or indeed analogy, in the instances. If it might be affirmed of men, that after their embracing of Christianity or the Protestant religion, they generally decline and grow worse (as to their moral conversation), than they were before, I do not know at present what apology could be readily fixed on, that might free the one, and the other, from grievous scandal. To fall from a profession of any religion, or any head or part of a religion, upon the account of the corruption that is in them, that so fall from it, is rather an honour than a reproach to the religion so deserted. But in and upon the embracement of any religion or doctrine in religion, for men to decline from that, which is the proper end of all true religion (which is the observation that riseth up against the doctrine Mr. Goodwin asserteth in reference to very many that embrace it), doubtless is not the crown and glory of that which they profess. Neither is this observation built on so slight experience, as to be muzzled with proverbs of swallows and woodcocks. The streets of our cities and paths of our villages being full of those fowls, or rather foul spirits, that give strength unto it.

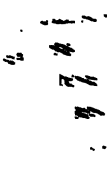
This is the whole of what Mr. Goodwin thought good to tender for the protection of his doctrine, from the charge laid down at the entrance of this digression; on the consideration whereof, I doubt not but it is evident how unable he is to shield it from the wound intended unto it thereby. And shall we now, can we, entertain any other thoughts of it, but that (having constantly hitherto been denied and op-

posed by the most zealous, painful, godly, successful preachers of the gospel, that these latter ages have been, through the goodness of God, blessed withal, entertained chiefly by men of loose dissolute principles and practices, enemies to the power of godliness, and the profession thereof, and strongly suspected to corrupt the minds and conversations of men that do embrace it) it is the only serviceable relief and assistance for the making of the ministry of the gospel useful and fruitful, ingenerating holiness and obedience in the lives and ways of men.

CHAP. XIV.

Mr. G.'s third argument proposed and considered. The drama borrowed by Mr. G. to make good this argument. The frame of speech ascribed to God according to our doctrine by the remonstrants weighed and considered. The dealing of God with man, and the importance of his exhortations, according to the doctrine of the saints' perseverance manifested. In what sense, and to what end, exhortations and threatenings are made to believers. The fallacious ground of this argument of Mr. G. Mr. G.'s. fourth argument proposed to consideration, considered. Eternal life, how and in what sense a reward of perseverance. The enforcement of the major proposition considered. The proposition new moulded, to make it of concernment to our doctrine, and denied: from the example of the obedience of Jesus Christ. Efficacy of grace not inconsistent with reward. The argument enforced with a new consideration: that consideration examined, and removed. Farther of the consistency of effectual grace, and gospel exhortations.

A THIRD argument is proposed, sect. 18. chap. 13. in these words: 'That doctrine which representeth God as weak, incongruous, and incoherent with himself, in his applications unto men, is not from God, and consequently that which contradicteth it, must needs be the truth: but the doctrine of perseverance, opposed by us, putteth this great dishonour upon God, representeth him weak, incongruous,' &c. *ergo*. For the proof of the minor proposition, to make good the charge in it exhibited against the doctrine of perseverance, there is a dramatical scheme induced, to whose framing and application Mr. Goodwin contributed no more but the pains of a translator, taking it from the Anti-synod, pp. 276, 277. in



either the one or the other of them are not from God, or according to the mind of God.'

Ans. The incongruity of this fiction, with the doctrine it is framed against, is so easily manifested, that it will not much concern us, to consider the incongruity that the several parts of it have one with another. For,

First, The whole foundation of this fanatic fabric, is ridiculous in itself, and ridiculously imposed on the doctrine of perseverance. For whereas it says, not that all saints have any comfortable assurance of their perseverance, and so may, by all gospel ways whatever, by promises and threatenings, be stirred up to the use of those means whereby perseverance is wrought, and assurance obtained; so it says, that no one saint in the world, ever had, can have, or was, taught to expect his perseverance, or the least sense or assurance of it, under such an uncouth supposition, as falling into and continuing in sins and abominations; the promises they have to assure them of their inseparable abode with God to the end, are, 'that he will write his law in their hearts, and put his fear in their inward parts; that they shall never depart from him;' and they shall be kept up thereto, by the use of means suitable as appointed of God for the attaining of the end proposed, being 'kept by the power of God, but through faith, unto salvation.' God doth not call (nor doth the doctrine of perseverance of the saints, or of the stability and unchangeableness of his promises in Christ to believers, assert it) any to believe that they shall never fall away from him, what sins and rebellions soever they fall into; neither hath he promised any such things unto them, but only that he will, through his grace, preserve them in the use of means from such rebellions, as are inconsistent with his love and free acceptation through Christ, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace; so that instead of the first part of this fiction, whose inconsistency with the latter is after argued, let this, according to the analogy of our doctrine, be instituted.

'You that truly believe in my Son Jesus Christ, and are made partakers of my Holy Spirit, who being heirs of the promises, and so have a right to that abundant consolation, that joy in believing, which I am willing all of you should receive; I know your fears, doubts, perplexities, and temptations, your failings, sins, and backslidings, and what sad

thoughts on the account of the evil of your own hearts and ways you are exposed to, as that you shall never abide, nor be able to continue with me, and in my love, to the end: let the feeble knees be strengthened, and the hands that hang down be lifted up: behold, I have ordained good works for you to walk in, as the way wherein you are to walk for the attainment of the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls; and to quicken you and stir you up hereunto, I have provided and established effectual ordinances, revealed in the word of my grace, whereunto you are to attend, and in the use of them, according to my mind, to grow up into holiness, in all manner of holy conversation, watching, fighting, resisting, contending with, and against, all the spiritual enemies of your souls. And as for me, this is my covenant with you, that my Spirit, which gives efficacy to all the means, ordinances, and advantages of gospel obedience, which I have afforded unto you, by whom I will fulfil in you all the good pleasure of my goodness, and the work of faith with power, so making you meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and preserving you to my heavenly kingdom, shall never depart from you; so that you, also, having my law written in your hearts, shall never utterly and wickedly depart from me. And for such sins and follies as you shall be overtaken withal, I will graciously heal your backslidings, and receive you freely.'

This is the language of the doctrine we maintain, which is not (we full well know) obnoxious to any exceptions or consequences whatever, but such as bold and prejudiced men, for the countenance of their vain conceits and opinions, will venture at any time to impose and fasten on the most precious truths of the gospel. That God should say to believers, as is imposed on him, 'Fall into what sins they will, or abominations they can, yet he will have them believe, that by an irresistible hand, he will necessitate them to persevere;' that is, in and under their apostacy (which is evidently implied in their falling into sins and abominations in the manner insisted on), is a ridiculous fiction, to the imagi- whereof the least colour is not supplied, by the doc- ended to be traduced thereby.

ndly, For the ensuing exhortations, promises, and ngs, as far as they are really evangelical, whose use

and tendency is argued to be inconsistent with the doctrine before proposed, I have formerly manifested. What is their proper use and efficacy in respect of believers, and their consistency with the truth we maintain, apprehended as it is indeed, and not wizarded with ugly and dreadful appearances, will I presume scarcely be called in question by any, who having received 'a kingdom that cannot be shaken,' do know what it is to 'serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.' It is true, they are made unto, and have their use in reference unto them that believe, and shall persevere therein: but they are not given unto them, as men assured of their perseverance; but as men called to the use of means for the establishing of their souls in the ways of obedience. They are not, in the method of the gospel, irrationally happed on such intimations of unchangeable love, or proposed under such wild conditionals and suppositions, as here by our author; but annexed to the appointment of those ways of grace and peace, which God calls his saints unto, being suited to work upon the new nature wherewith they are endued, as spreading itself over all the faculties of their rational souls, wherein are principles fit to be excited to operation, by exhortations and promises.

Thirdly, All that is indeed argumentative in this discourse, is built on this foundation; that a spiritual assurance of attaining the end by the use of means, is discouraging and dissuasive to the use of those means. A proposition so uncouth in itself, so contradictory to the experience of all the saints of God, so derogatory to the glory and honour of Jesus Christ himself (who in all his obedience had doubtless an assurance of the end of it all), as any thing that can well fall into the imaginations of the hearts of men. Might not the devil have thus replied upon our Saviour, when he tempted him to turn stones into bread, and cast himself from a pinnacle of the temple, and received answer, that 'man lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God?' But alas, 'thou Jesus the Son of the living God, that art persuaded thou art so, and that God will preserve thee, whether thou usest any means or no, that thou shalt never be starved for want of bread, nor hurt thyself by any fall, whatever thou dost, the angels having charge that no evil shall come nigh thee, nor thy foot be hurt against a

stone, thou mayest now cast thyself headlong from the temple, to manifest thy assurance of the love and faithfulness of God with his promises to thee.' If our Saviour thought it sufficient to stop the mouth of the devil, to manifest from Scripture, that notwithstanding the assurance from God that any one hath of the end, yet he is to use the means tending thereunto, (a neglect whereof is a sinful tempting of God); we shall not need to go farther for an answer to the same kind of objections in the mouth of any adversary whatever.

His nineteenth section containeth his fourth argument, in these words:

'If there be no possibility of the saints falling away finally, then is their persevering incapable of reward from God. But their final perseverance is not incapable of reward from God: *ergo*. The minor proposition I presume contains nothing but what is the sense of those who deny the conclusion: or, however, it contains nothing but what is the express sense of the Lord Christ, where he saith, That he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved; therefore, I suppose we shall be excused from farther proof of this, without any prejudice to the cause in hand.'

Ans. I grant eternal life may be called the reward of perseverance in the sense that the Scripture useth that word, applied to the matter in hand; it is afterward neither procured by (properly and morally as the deserving cause), nor proportioned unto, the obedience of them by whom it is attained; a reward it is, that withal is the free gift of God, and an inheritance purchased by Jesus Christ; a reward of bounty, and not of justice, in respect of them upon whom it is bestowed, but only of faithfulness in reference to the promise of it: a reward, by being a gracious encouragement, as the end of our obedience, not as the procurement or desert of it; so we grant it a reward of perseverance, though those words of our Saviour, 'he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved,' expressed a consequence of things only, and not a connexion of casuality of the one upon the other; of the foundation of this discourse concerning a pos-

declining, immediate consideration shall be had.

then:

sequence of the major proposition stands firm

dation; No act of the creature whereunto it is

necessitated, or which it cannot possibly decline, or but do, is, by any law of God or rule of justice, rewardable; therefore, if the saints be necessitated by God to persevere finally, so that he leaves unto them no possibility of declining finally, their final perseverance is not, according to any law of God or man, nor indeed to any principles of reason or equity, capable of reward; no whit more than actions merely natural are: nay, of the two, there seems to be more reason why acts merely natural (as for example, eating, drinking, breathing, sleeping) should be rewarded, inasmuch as these flow in a way of necessity, yet from an inward principle and connatural to the agent, than such actions whereunto the agent is constrained, necessitated, and determined, by a principle of power from without, and which is not intrinsical to it.'

And this is the strength of the argument, which will quickly appear to be very weakness. For,

First, The efficacy of these expressions (whereunto it is necessitated, and from which they cannot possibly decline), as to their influence into this argument, ariseth clearly from their ambiguity; we deny any to be necessitated to persevere, or that our doctrine affirms any such thing, taking that expression to hold out a power upon their wills in their operations, inconsistent with the utmost liberty whereof in spiritual things (having received a spiritual principle) men are capable. They are not so necessitated to persevere as that all the acts of their obedience, whereby they do persevere, should not be free but necessary, indeed they are not at all, nor in any sense, necessitated to persevere: there is no necessity attends their perseverance, but only in respect of the event, with reference to the unchangeable purpose and infallible promise of God; the like may be said of that other expression 'possibility of declining:' God leaves in them a possibility of declining, as to their way and manner of walking with him, though he leaves not to them a possibility of declining or falling totally from him, as to the issue and event of the whole matter, which doth not in the least necessitate them to, or in, any of their operations.

Secondly, The proposition must be cast into another mould, before it will be of any determinate signification in opposition to the doctrine it opposeth; and tuned to another mood, before it will give a certain sound to any battle

against it; and this is, that no act of the creature that is wrought in order to the obtaining of any end promised to be certainly attained thereby, is rewardable of God (though for perseverance it is not any act of the creature, but only a modus of its obedience); and thus it looks towards the concernment of this doctrine; yet before this proposition pass, to omit sundry other things that would gladly rise to the destruction of it, I desire one query may be assailed concerning the obedience of Jesus Christ, whether it were not necessary that the end of his obedience should follow? And whether it were not impossible he should decline from his obedience? And if it were, whether it were impossible that God should give a reward thereunto?

But, thirdly, The intendment of this proposition, as far as it concerns us (and that indeed is with a respect to our doctrine of the efficacy of grace, and not this of perseverance), is this, 'That which is wrought in us, by the effectual grace of God, is not capable of reward from God;' a proposition, which though capable of some plea and colour, taking 'reward' in a pure legal sense; supposing the persons seeking after it, to do it by a service and duties proportioned unto it, yet is so openly and directly contradictory to the tenor and design of God in the covenant of grace by Jesus Christ, with the whole dispensation of the Spirit given to abide with believers, for all the ends and purposes as to their obedience, as I shall content myself to deny it, expecting Mr. Goodwin's proofs of it. When 'rivers run backward, heavy things ascend,' &c.

Fourthly, For the flourish added to these assertions, by comparing the acts of the saints' obedience upon a supposition of the grace of God 'working them in them,' with their natural actions of 'eating, drinking, sleeping,' as to their tendency to exalt the glory of God in rewarding, it proceeds either from gross ignorance of the doctrine opposed, or wilful prevaricating from that light of it which he hath whoever taught that God's operations in and towards believers, as to their perseverance in faith and obedience, did consist in an outward constraint of an unwilling principle. God gives a principle of obedience to them, he writes and implants his law in their hearts, and moves them effectually to act suitably to that inward principle they have so received;

which though spiritual and supernatural in respect of its rise and manner of bestowing, yet is connatural to them in respect of its being a principle of operation. We are not then in the least beholding to our author for his following concession. 'That as a prince may give great things to them that eat, and drink, and breathe, but not as rewards, so God may give eternal life to them that are so necessitated by him to persevere, though not as a reward.' For although we will not contend with God about eternal life; that he give it us under the notion of a reward, and desire to be much affected with the consideration of it, as a free gift of grace, an eminent purchase of the blood of God, and look upon it merely as a reward of bounty, so called as being the end whereunto our obedience is suited and the rest of our labours, yet we say, in an evangelical sense and acceptation, it is properly so proposed to that obedience and perseverance therein, which is wrought in us by the efficacy of the grace of God, as it lies in a tendency unto that end, which to be attained by those means, he hath infallibly determined.

He proceeds, therefore, to enforce his argument with a new consideration.

'If we speak of rewards promised in order to the moving or inclining of the wills of men towards such or such actions and ways, of which kind also the rewards mentioned in the Scriptures, as yet remaining to be conferred by God upon men, are, the case is yet more clear; viz. That they are appropriate unto such actions and ways, unto the election and choice, whereof men are not necessitated in one kind or other; especially not by any physical or foreign power: for to what purpose should a reward be promised unto me, to persuade or make me willing to engage in such or such a course, or to perform such and such a service, in case I be necessitated to the same engagement or performance otherways? Or what place is there left for a moral inducement, where a physical necessity hath done the execution? Or if the moral inducement hath done the execution, and sufficiently raised and engaged the will to the action, with what congruity of reason, yea, or common sense, can a physical necessity be superinduced?'

Ans. What there is more in this than what went before, unless sophistry and falsity, I see not. For, first, Though I conceive that eternal life is proposed in the Scripture as our

reward, rather upon the account of supporting and cheering our spirits in the deficiencies, temptations, and entanglements attending our obedience, than directly to engage unto obedience (though consequently it doth that also), whereunto we have so many other unconquerable engagements and inducements; yet the consideration thereof in that sense also, as it moves the wills of men to actions suitable to the attainment of it, is very well consistent with the doctrine in hand. That old calumny, a hundred times repeated and insisted on in this contest, of our wills being necessitated and deprived of their choice and election, unless it could be tolerably made good, will be of no use to Mr. Goodwin as to his present purpose. The whole strength of this argumentation is built on this supposal; That the effectual grace of God in its working the will and deed in believers, or the Spirit's doing of it by grace, with God's fore-determination of events, doth take away the liberty of the will, inducing into it a necessary manner of operation, determining it to one, antecedently in order of time to its own determination of itself, which is false, and no wise inferred from the doctrine under consideration. Yea, as God's providential concurrence with men and determination of their wills, to all their actions as actions is the principle of all their natural liberty; so his gracious concurrence with them, or operations in them, as unto scriptural effects, working in them to will, is the principle of all their true spiritual liberty: 'when the Son makes us free, then are we free indeed.' The reward then is proposed to an understanding enlightened, a will quickened and made free by grace, to stir them up to actions suitable to them, who are in expectation of so bountiful a close of their obedience: (which actions are yet wrought in them by the Spirit of God, whose fruits they are) and this to very good purpose, in the hearts of all that know what it is to walk with God, and to serve him in the midst of temptations, unless they are under the power of some such particular error, as turns away their eyes from believing the truth.

Secondly, The opposition here pretended between a physical necessitating, and a moral inducement, for the producing of the same effect, is in plain terms intended between the efficacy of God's internal grace, and the use of external exhortations and motives; if God give an internal principle, or spiritual habit, fitting for, inclining to, spiritual

actions and duties; if he follows the work so begun in us (who yet of ourselves can do nothing, nor are sufficient to think a good thought) with continual supplies of his Spirit and grace, 'working daily in us according to the exceeding greatness of his power, the things that are well pleasing in his sight,' then, though he work upon us, as creatures endued with reason, understandings, wills, and affections, receiving glory from us according to the nature he hath endued us withal, all exhortations and encouragements to obedience required at our hands, are vain and foolish; now because we think this to be the very wisdom of God, and the opposition made unto it to be a mere invention of Satan, to magnify corrupted nature, and decry all the efficacy of the grace of the new covenant, we must have something besides and beyond the naked assertion of our author, to cause us once to believe it.

Thirdly, The great execution that is made by moral inducement solely, without any internally efficacious grace, in the way of gospel obedience, is often supposed, but not once attempted to be put upon the proof or demonstration; it shall then suffice to deny that any persuasions, outward motives, or inducements whatever, are able of themselves to raise, engage, and carry out, the will unto action, so that any good spiritual action should be brought forth on that account, without the effectual influence and physical operation of internal grace; and Mr. Goodwin is left to prove it, together with such other assertions derogatory to the free grace of God, dogmatically imposed upon his reader in this chapter, whereof some have been already remarked, and others may in due time. The residue of this section (the 13th), spent to prove that eternal life is given as a reward to perseverance, having already manifested the full consistency of the proposition, in a gospel acceptation of the word 'reward,' with whatever we teach of the perseverance of the saints, I suppose myself unconcerned in: and, therefore, passing by the triumphant conclusion of this argument asserting an absolute power in men to exhibit or, decline from, obedience, I shall go on to that, which, in my apprehension, is of more importance, and will give occasion to a discourse, I hope, not unuseful or unprofitable to the reader; I shall therefore assign it a peculiar place and chapter to itself.

CHAP. XV.

Mr. G.'s fifth argument for the apostacy of true believers. The weight of this argument taken from the sins of believers. The difference between the sins of believers and unregenerate persons proposed to consideration, James i. 14, 15. *The rise and progress of lust and sin. The fountain of all sin, in all persons, is lust,* Rom. vii. 7. *Observations clearing the difference between regenerate and unregenerate persons in their sinning, as to the common fountain of all sin: the first. The second, of the universality of lust in the soul by nature. The third, in two inferences: the first, unregenerate men sin with their whole consent. The second inference concerning the reign of sin, and reigning sin. The fourth, concerning the universal possession of the soul by renewing grace. The fifth, that true grace bears rule wherever it be. Inferences from the former considerations. The first, that in every regenerate person there are diverse principles of all moral operations:* Rom. vii. 19, 20. *opened. The second, that sin cannot reign in a regenerate person. The third, that regenerate persons sin not with their whole consent. Answer to the argument at the entrance proposed. Believers never sin with their whole consent and wills. Mr. G.'s attempt to remove the answer. His exceptions considered and removed. Plurality of wills in the same person, in the Scripture sense: of the opposition between flesh and spirit: that no regenerate person sins with his full consent, proved. Of the Spirit, and his lustings in us. The actings of the Spirit in us free, not suspended on any conditions in us. The same farther manifested. Mr. G.'s discourse of the first and second motions of the Spirit considered. The same considerations farther carried on. Peter Martyr's testimony considered.* Rom. vii. 19, 20. *considered. Difference between the opposition made to sin in persons regenerate, and that in persons unregenerate, farther argued. Of the sense of* Rom. vii. *and in what sense believers do the works of the flesh. The close of these considerations. The answer to the argument at the entrance of the chapter opened. The argument new formed: the major proposition limited, and granted, and the minor denied. The proof of the major considered:* Gal. v. 21. Eph. v. 5, 6. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. *Believers how concerned in comminations. Threatening proper to unbelievers for their sins. Farther objections proposed and removed. Of the progress of saints intempting to sin. The effect of lust in temptations. Difference between regenerate and unregenerate persons as to the tempting of lust,* 1. *in respect of universality;* 2. *of power. Objections answered. Whether believers sin only out of infirmity. Whether believers may sin out of malice, and with deliberation. Of the state of believers, who upon their sin may be excommunicated. Whether the body of Christ may be dismembered. What body of Christ it is that is intended. Mr. G.'s thoughts to this purpose examined. Mr. G.'s discourse of the way whereby Christ keeps or may keep his members examined. Members of Christ cannot become members of Satan:* 1 Cor. vi. 15. *considered, of the sense*

and use of the word ἄφας. Christ takes members out of the power of Satan, gives up none to him. Repetition of regeneration asserted by the doctrine of apostacy. The repetition disproved. Mr. G.'s notion of regeneration examined at large and rebuked. Relation between God and his children indissoluble. The farther progress of lust for the production of sin; it draws off, and entangles: drawing away, what it is. The distance between regenerate and unregenerate persons in their being drawn away by lust. Farther description of him who is drawn away by lust; and of the difference formerly mentioned. Of lusts enticing. How far this may befall regenerate men. To do sin, Rom. vii. *what it intendeth. Lusts conceiving, wherein it consists. Of the bringing forth of sin, and how far the saints of God may proceed therein.* 1 John iii. 9. *opened: the scope of the place discovered: vindicated. The words farther opened. The proposition in the words universal: inferences from thence. The subject of that proposition considered, every one that is born of God, what is affirmed of them. What meant by committing of sin. Mr. G.'s opposition to the sense of that expression given. Reasons for the confirmation of it. Mr. G.'s reasons against it, proposed and considered. The farther exposition of the word carried on: how he that is born of God cannot sin: several kinds of impossibility. Mr. G.'s attempt to answer the argument from this place, particularly examined. The reasons of the proposition in the text considered: of the seed of God abideth: the nature of that seed, what it is, wherein it consists. Of the abiding of this seed. Of the latter part of the apostle's reason, he is born of God: our argument from the words. Mr. G.'s endeavour to evade that argument; his exposition of the words removed. Farther of the meaning of the word abideth. The close.*

Mr. Goodwin's fifth argument for the saints' apostacy, is taken from the consideration of the sins which they have fallen into, or possibly may so do, and it is thus proposed, sect. 20.

'They who are in a capacity, or possibility of perpetrating the works of the flesh, are in a possibility of perishing, and consequently in a possibility of falling away, and that finally from the grace and favour of God, in case they be in an estate of his grace and favour at the present; but the saints, or true believers, are in a possibility of perpetrating the works of the flesh, and therefore also they are in a possibility of perishing, and so of falling away from the grace and favour of God, wherein at present they stand. The major proposition of this argument, to wit, they who are in a possibility of perpetrating, or customarily acting the works of the flesh, are in a possibility of perishing, is clearly proved

from all such Scriptures which exclude all workers of iniquity, and fulfillers of the lusts of the flesh from the kingdom of God; of which sort are many; of the which, saith the apostle, speaking of the lusts of the flesh, adultery, fornication, &c. I tell you, as I have also told you in times past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God; so again, For this ye know, that no whoremonger, or unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolator, hath any inheritance of the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience: yet again, Know ye not that the unrighteous shall never inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters shall inherit the kingdom of God. From such passages as these, which are very frequent in the Scriptures, it is as clear as the light of the sun at noon-day, that they who may possibly commit such sins as those specified, adultery, fornication, idolatry, may as possibly perish and be for ever excluded the kingdom of God.'

Ans. Because of all arguments whatever used against the truth we assert, this seems to me to wear the best colours on its back, and to have its face best painted; viz. with that plea of the 'inconsistency of sin with the favour and acception of God' seeming to have a tendency to caution believers in their ways and walkings, to be more careful in watching against temptations, I shall more largely insist on what the Lord hath been pleased to reveal concerning the sins and failings of such as he is yet pleased to accept in a covenant of mercy, whom though he chastens and sorely rebukes, yet he 'gives not their souls over unto death, nor takes his loving-kindness from them for ever;' now because the inside and strength of this objection, consists in a comparison instituted between the sins of believers, and the sins of unregenerate persons, which being laid in the balance are found of equal burdensomeness unto God, and therefore are in expectance of a like reward from him, I shall in the first place, before I come in particular to answer the argument proposed, manifest the difference that is between regenerate persons and unregenerate in their sinning, and consequently also between their sins, wherein such principles shall be laid

'down and proved, as may with an easy application remove all that is added in the farther carrying on, and endeavoured vindication of the argument in hand.

A foundation of this discourse we have laid in James i. 14, 15. 'But every man is tempted,' saith the Holy Ghost, 'when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.' The Holy Ghost discovers the fountain of all sin, and pursues it in the streams of it into the dead sea, whereinto it falls; all sin whatever is from temptation, and that which tempts to all sin is the cause of all sin; this fountain of sin is here discovered, the principle, proper, criminal cause of sin, in the beginning of ver. 14. The adversative 'but' is exclusive of any other faulty cause of sin, that should principally fall under our consideration, especially of God, of whom mention was made immediately before; now this is affirmed to be every man's lust. The general way and means that this original of all sin useth for the production of it is also discovered; and that is, temptation. Every man's own lust tempts him; the progress also it makes in carrying on of sin whereunto it tempts, is farther described in the several parts and degrees of it. 1. It draws away and entices, and the persons towards whom it exerts this efficacy, are drawn away or enticed. 2. It conceives. 'Lust conceives:' the subject being prepared, answering its drawing away and enticing, without more ado, it conceives sin, and then it brings forth into action; that is, either into open perpetration, or deliberate determination of its accomplishment, and then it finisheth sin, or comes up to the whole work that sin tends to: whereunto is subjoined the dismal end and issue of this progress of sin, which is death: eternal death is in the womb of finished sin, and will be brought forth by it.

This being the progress of sin from the first rise which is lust, to the last end which is death, the way and path that the best and most refined unregenerate men in the world do never thoroughly forsake, though they may sometimes step out of it, or be stopped in it; a way wherein whoever walks to the end, may be sure to find the end; I shall consider the several particulars laid down, and shew in them all, at least the most material, the difference that is between be-

lievers and unbelievers, whilst they do walk or may walk in in this path, and then manifest where, and when, all saints break out of it for ever; so that they come not to the close thereof; and therein shall give a full answer unto the whole strength and design of the argument in hand, which consisteth, as was said, in a comparison instituted between the sins and demerits of believers and unbelievers.

First, The fountain, principle, and cause of all sin whatever, in all persons whatever, is lust; every one's own lust is the cause of his own sin: this is the mother, womb, and *fomes* of sin, which Paul says he had not been acquainted withal, but by the law; Rom. vii. 7. 'Nay, I had not known sin but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.' That which in the entrance he calls sin indefinitely, in the close he particularly terms lust; as being the hidden secret cause of all sin, and which once discovered swallows up the thoughts of all other sin, it being altogether in vain to deal with them, or to set a man's self in opposition to them, whilst this sinful womb of them is alive and prevalent; this is that which we call original sin, as to that part of it which consists in the universal alienation of our hearts from God, and unconquerable, habitual, natural inclination of them to every thing that is evil; for this sin works in us 'all manner of concupiscence;' Rom. vii. 8. This, I say, is the womb, cause, and principle of sin, both in believers and unbelievers; the root on which the bitter fruit of it doth grow wherever it is; no man ever sins but it is from his own lust. And in this there is an agreement between the sins of believers and others, they are all from the same fountain, yet not such an agreement but that there is a difference herein also. For the clearing whereof observe,

First, That by nature this lust, which is the principle of sin, is seated in all the faculties of the soul, receiving divers appellations according to the variety of the subjects wherein it is; and is sometimes expressed in terms of privation, want, and deficiency, sometimes by positive inclination to evil. In the understanding it is blindness, darkness, giddiness, folly, madness. In the will, obstinacy and rebellion. In the heart and affections, pride, stubbornness, hardness, sensuality. In all negatively and privatively, death: positively, lust, corruption, flesh, concupiscence, sin, the old man, and

the like. There is nothing in the soul of a man that hath the least influence into any action as moral, but is wholly possessed with this depraved vicious habit, and exerts itself always, and only, in a suitableness thereunto.

Secondly, That this lust hath so taken possession of men by nature, that in reference to any spiritual act or duty they are nothing else but lust and flesh; that which is 'born of the flesh is flesh;' John iii. 6. It is all so, it is all spiritual flesh; that is, it is wholly and habitually corrupt, as to the doing any thing that is good. If any thing in a man might seem to be exempted, it should be his mind, the seat of all those things which are commonly called the 'relics of the image of God,' but that also is flesh as the apostle at large asserts it, Rom. viii. and 'enmity to God;' neither is it of any weight which is objected, 'that there is in unregenerate men, the knowledge of the truth which they retain in ungodliness; Rom. i. 18. conscience accusing, and excusing; Rom. ii. 14. the knowledge of sin which is by the law, with sundry other endowments which, they say, doubtless are not flesh.' I answer, they are all flesh, in the sense that the Scripture useth that word; the Holy Ghost speaks of nothing in man, in reference unto any duty of obedience unto God, but it is either flesh or Spirit, these two comprehend every man in the world; 'every man is either in the flesh, or in the Spirit;' Rom. viii. The utmost improvement of all natural faculties whatever, the most complete subjection whereunto they are brought by convictions, yet leaves the same impotency in them to spiritual good, as they were born with all the same habitual inclination to sin, however entangled and hampered from going out to the actual perpetrating of it; neither are they themselves any thing the better; nor hath God any thing of that glory by them, which ariseth from the willing obedience of his creatures.

Thirdly, It being the state of every man's proper lust, which is the fountain of all sin, two things will follow.

First, That in whomsoever it is, in its compass and power as above described, as it is in every unregenerate man, however convinced of sin, he sins with his full and whole consent; all that is within him consents to every sin he commits; unregenerate men sin with their whole hearts and souls. In every act their carnal minds are not, will not be, subject to

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few or more, known or unknown, little or great, all is one; sin reigns, and such a person is under the power and dominion of sin: so that in plain terms, to have sin reign, is to be unconverted; and to have sin not to reign, is to be converted, to have received a new principle of life from above. This is evident from the fifth and sixth chapters of the epistle to the Romans; the seat of this doctrine of reigning sin, the opposition insisted on by the apostle, is between the reign of sin and grace; and in pursuit thereof, he manifests how true believers are translated from the one to the other. To have sin reign is to be in a state of sin; to have grace reign, is to be in a state of grace. So, chap. v. 21. 'As sin reigned unto death, so grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.' The sin he speaks of, is that whereof he treats in all that chapter; the sin of nature, the lust whereof we speak, this by nature reigneth unto death; but when grace comes by Jesus Christ, the soul is delivered from the power thereof. So in the whole sixth chapter, it is our change of state and condition that the apostle insists on, in our delivery from the reign of sin; and he tells us, this is that that destroys it, our being under grace, ver. 14. 'Sin shall not have dominion over you, because you are not under the law, but under grace;' plainly then, there are two lords and rulers, and these are original or indwelling sin and grace or the Spirit of it; the first lord, the apostle discovers with his entrance upon his rule and dominion, chap. v. and this all men by nature are under; the second he describes, chap. vi. which sets out the rule and reign of grace in believers by Jesus Christ. And then,

Thirdly, The place that both these lords have in this life in a believer, chap. 7. This then is the only reigning sin, and in whomsoever it is in its power and compass as it is in all unregenerate men, in them, and in them only, doth sin reign, and every sin they commit is with full consent (as was manifested before), in exact willing obedience to the sovereign lord that reigns in them.

Fourthly, Observe that the grace, new creature, principle or spiritual life that is given to, bestowed on, and wrought in all, and only, believers, be it in the lowest and most remiss degree that can be imagined, is yet no less universally spread over the whole soul, than the contrary habit and principle of

lust and sin, whereof we have spoken. In the understanding it is light in the Lord; in the will, life; in the affections, love, delight, &c. those being reconciled, who were alienated by wicked works. Wherever there is any thing, the least of grace, there something of it is in every thing of the soul, that is a capable seat for good or evil habits, or dispositions; 'He that is in Christ is a new creature;' 2 Cor. v. 17. not renewed in one or other particular, 'he is a new creature.'

Fifthly, That wherever true grace is, in what degree soever, there it bears rule; though sin be in the same subject with it; as sin reigns before grace comes, so grace reigns when it doth once come: and the reason is, because sin having the first rule and dominion in the heart, abiding there, there is neither room nor place for grace, but what is made by conquest. Now whoever enters into a possession by right of conquest, what resistance soever be made, if he prevail to a conquest, he reigns. In every regenerate man, though grace be never so weak, and corruption never so strong, yet properly the sovereignty belongs to grace. Having entered upon the soul, and all the powers of it by conquest so long as it abides, there it doth reign; so that to say a regenerate man may fall into reigning sin, as it is commonly expressed (though as we have manifested no sin reigns, but the sin of nature, as no good act reigneth, but the spirit and habit of grace), and yet continue regenerate, is all one as to say, he may have, and not have true grace at the same time.

Now from these considerations, some farther inferences may be made. First, That in every regenerate person, there are in a spiritual sense, two principles of all his actings: two wills; there is the will of the flesh, and there is the will of the Spirit; a regenerate man is spiritually, and in Scripture expression, two men; a new man and an old; an inward man and a body of death; and hath two wills, having two natures, not as natural faculties, but as moral principles of operation; and this keeps all his actions as moral, from being perfect, absolute, or complete, in any kind. He doth good
his whole heart upon the account of sincerity, but he
t good with his whole heart upon the account of per-
and when he doth evil there is still a non-submit-

ting, an unconsenting principle; this the apostle complains of, and declares, Rom. vii. 19, 20. 'The good that I would, I do not, but the evil which I would not, that do I; now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me; I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me; for I delight in the law of God after the inward man.' There is an 'I' and an 'I' at opposition, a will and not willing; a doing and not doing; a delighting and not delighting, all in the same person; so that there is this difference at the entrance, between what sin soever of regenerate persons and others, though the principle of sinning be the same, for the kind and nature of it in them and others; all sin, every man's sins, be who he will, believer or unbeliever, being tempted by his own lust: yet that lust possesseth the whole soul, and takes in the virtual consent of the whole man, notwithstanding the control and checks of conscience, the light of the judgment, in him that is unregenerate; but in every regenerate person, there is an unconsenting principle, which is as truly the man himself, that doth not concur in sin, that doth expressly dissent from it, as the other is from whence it flows.

Secondly, That sin neither can, doth, nor ever shall, reign in regenerate persons. The reason of this I acquainted you with before, and the apostle thinks this a sufficient proof of this assertion, because 'they are under grace;' Rom. vii. 14. Whilst the principle of grace abides in them, which reigns wherever it be, or the free acceptance of God in the gospel is towards them, it is impossible upon the account of any actual sin whatever, whereinto they may fall, that sin should reign in them: nothing gives sin a reign and dominion, but a total defect of all true grace whatever, not only as to the exerting itself, but as to any habitual relicts of it; it may be overwhelmed sometimes with temptations and corruptions, but it is grace still, as the least spark of fire is fire, though it should be covered with never so great an heap of ashes, and it reigns then.

Thirdly, That regenerate persons sin not with their whole and full consent. Consent may be taken two ways; first, morally, for the approbation of the thing done; so the apostle says, that in the inward man, he did 'consent to the law, that it was good;' Rom. vii. 16. that is, he did approve it as

such, like it, delight in it as good; and thus a regenerate man never consents to sin; no, nor unregenerate persons neither, unless they are such as being 'past feeling, are given up to work lasciviousness with greediness:' a regenerate person is so far from thus consenting to sin, that before it, in it, after it, he utterly condemns, disallows, hates it as in himself, and by himself committed. Secondly, consent may be taken in a physical sense, for the concurrence of the commanding, and acting principles of the soul unto its operations: and in this sense, an unregenerate man sins with his full consent, and his whole will; a regenerate man doth not, cannot do so. For though there is not in that consent to sin, which his will inclined by the remaining disposition of sin in it, doth give an actual sensible reaction of the other principle, yet there is an express not consenting; and by the power that it hath in the soul (for habits have power in and over the subjects wherein they are), it preserves it from being wholly engaged into sin; and this is the great intendment of the apostle, Rom. vii. 19—22.

From what hath been spoken will easily appear what answer may be given to the former argument, to wit, that notwithstanding any sins that either the Scripture or the experience of men, do evince that the saints may fall into, yet that they never sin or perpetrate sin with their full and whole consent, whereby they should be looked upon, in and under their sins, in the same state and condition with unregenerate persons in whom sin reigneth, committing the same sin, and how insufficient any thing produced by Mr. Goodwin, in defence of the argument laid down at the entrance of this chapter, as to remove the answer given unto it from believers not sinning with their whole consent, may easily be demonstrated. This he thus proposeth:

'Some to maintain this position, That all the sins of true believers are sins of infirmity, lay hold on this shield, such men, they say, never sin with their whole wills, or with full consent, therefore they never sin but through infirmity; that they never sin with full consent, they conceive they prove sufficiently from that of the apostle, For the good that I would, I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I answer, first, that the saints

cannot sin but with their whole wills or full consents, is undeniably proved by this consideration: viz. Because otherwise there should be not only a plurality or diversity, but also a contrariety of wills in the same person, at one and the same instant of time, viz. when the supposed act of evil is produced. Now it is an impossibility of the first evidence, that there should be a plurality of acts, and these contrary one to the other in the same subject or agent, at one or the same instant of time; it is true, between the first movings of the flesh in a man towards the committing of the sin, and the completing of the sin by an actual and external patration of it, there may be successively in him not only a plurality, but even a contrariety of volitions or motions of the will, according to what the Scripture speaketh concerning the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; but when the flesh, having prevailed in the combat, bringeth forth her desire into act, the Spirit ceaseth from his act of lusting; otherwise it would follow that the flesh is greater and stronger in her lusting, than the Spirit of God in his; and that when the flesh lusteth after the perpetration of such or such a sin, the Spirit as to the hindering of it lusteth but in vain, which is contrary to that of the apostle, Greater is he that is in you (speaking as it is clear of the Spirit of God unto true believers), than he that is in the world; meaning Satan and all his auxiliaries, sin, flesh, corruption.'

Ans. What we intend by the saints not sinning with their whole wills hath been declared; that there is not a consistency in the explanation we have given, Mr. Goodwin asserts, because it would infer 'a plurality, yea a contrariety of wills in the same person at the same time.' That there is a plurality, yea a contrariety of wills in the Scripture sense of the expression of the will of a man, was before from the Scripture declared; not a plurality of wills in a physical sense, as the will is a natural faculty of the soul, but in a moral and analogical sense, as it is taken for a habit or principle of good or evil. The will is a natural faculty; one nature hath one will; in every regenerate man there are two natures, the new or divine, and the old or corrupted. In the same sense there are in him two wills, as was declared. But, saith he, 'It is an impossibility of the first evidence

that there should be a plurality of acts in the same subject, at the same time, and these contrary one to another.' But,

1. If you intend acts in a moral consideration, unless you add about the same object, which you do not, this assertion is so far from any evidence of truth, that it is ridiculously false; may not the same person love God, and hate the devil at the same time? But,

2. How pass you so suddenly from a plurality of wills, to a plurality of acts? by the will we intend (in the sense wherein we speak of it) an habit, not any act; i. e. The will as habitually invested with a new principle, and not as actually willing from thence, and by virtue thereof. Arminius, from whom our author borrows this discourse, fell not into this sophistry; he tells you, 'There cannot be contrary wills or volitions about the same act;' but is it with Mr. G. or Arminius, an impossibility that there should be a mixed action partly-voluntary, and partly involuntary? actions whose principles are from without by persuasion may be, so a man's throwing his goods in the sea to save his own life; now the principles whereof we speak, flesh and grace, are internal and contrary; and shall not the actions that proceed from a faculty wherein such contrary principles have their residence, be partly voluntary, partly involuntary?

3. But he tells you, 'That though there might be lusting of the Spirit against the flesh before the act of sin, yet when it comes to the acting of it then it ceaseth, and so the act is wrought with the whole will.'

First, Though this were so, yet this doth not prove but that the action is mixed, and not absolutely and wholly voluntary. Mixed actions are so esteemed from the antecedent deliberation and dissent, though the will be at length prevailed upon thereunto, and I have shewed before that in the very action there is a virtual dissent, because of the opposite principle that is in the will. But,

Secondly, How doth it appear that the Spirit doth not 'lust againt the flesh' (though not to a prevalency) even in the exertion of the acts of sin? In every good act that a man doth, because evil is present with him, though the prevalency be of the part of the Spirit, and the principle of ce, yet the flesh also with its lustings doth always in part ıpt it; thence are all the spots, stains, and imperfec-

tions, of the holy things and duties of the saints; and if the flesh in its lusting, will inmix itself with our good actions to their defilement and impairing, why may not the Spirit in the ill, not inmix itself and its lustings therewith, but bear off from the full influence of the will into them which otherwise it would have.

But saith he, 'If the Spirit doth not cease lusting before the flesh bring forth the act of sin, then is the Spirit conquered by the flesh, contrary to that of the apostle, 1 John iv. 4. Stronger is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.' But,

First, If from hence the flesh must be thought and conceived to be stronger than the Spirit, because it prevails in any act unto sin, notwithstanding the contending of the Spirit, how much more must it be judged to prevail over it and to conquer it, if it cause it utterly to cease, and not to strive at all? He that restrains another that he shall not oppose him at all, hath a greater power than he who conquers him in his resistance; but why doth Mr. Goodwin fear least the flesh should be asserted to be stronger in us than the Spirit? Is not his whole design to prove that it is, or may be, so much stronger and more prevalent than it, that whereas it is confessed on all hands, that the Spirit doth never wholly conquer the flesh, that it shall not remain in the saints in this life, yet that the flesh doth wholly prevail over the Spirit and conquer it to an utter expulsion of it, out of the hearts of them in whom it is.

Secondly, In the prevalency of the flesh, it is not the Spirit himself that is conquered, but only some motions, and actings of him in the heart; now though some particular actings and motions of his may not come out eventually unto success, yet if he generally bears rule in the heart, he is not to be said (even as in us and acting in us), not to be stronger than the flesh. He is, as in us, on this account, said to be stronger than he that is in the world, because notwithstanding all the opposition that is against us, he preserveth us in our state and condition of acceptation with God, and walking with him with an upright heart, in good works and duties for the most part, though sometimes the flesh prevails unto sin, from which yet he recovers us by repentance.

Thirdly, To speak a little to Mr. Goodwin's sense; by the Spirit's insufficiency it is manifest from the text urged, and from what follows in the same place, that he intends not a spiritual vital principle in the will, having its residence there, with its contrary principle the flesh (perhaps he will grant no such thing), but the Spirit of God himself. How now doth this Spirit lust? Not formally doubtless, but by causing us so to do; and how doth it do that in Mr. Goodwin's judgment? Merely by persuading of us so to do; so that to have the flesh prevail against the Spirit, is nothing in his sense, but to have sin prevail, and the motives of the flesh above the motives used by the Spirit, which may be done, and yet the Spirit continue unquestionably stronger than the flesh.

Fourthly, The sum is, If the Spirit and the flesh, lust and grace, may be looked on as habitual qualities and principles in the wills of the same persons, so that though a man hath but one will, yet by reason of these contrary qualities, he is to be esteemed as two diverse principles of operation, it is evident that having contrary inclinations continually, the will hath in its actings, a relation to both these principles, so that no sin is committed by such a one with his whole will and full consent; that contrary qualities in a remiss degree may be in the same subject, is known; 'Lippis et tonsoribus;' these adverse principles the flesh and Spirit, are as those contrary qualities of the same subject; and the inclinations, yea and the illicit acts of the will, are of the same nature with them; so that in the same act they may both be working, though not with equal efficacy. Notwithstanding any thing then said to the contrary, it appears that in the sins which the saints fall into, they do not sin with their whole wills and full consent; which of itself is a sufficient answer to the foregoing argument.

Sect. 25. contains a discourse, too long to be imposed upon the reader by a transcription: there are three parts of it, the first rendering a reason, whence it is, that if the 'Spirit be stronger than the flesh, yet the flesh doth often prevail in its lustings.'

The second, 'The way of the Spirit's return, to act in us after its motions have been rejected.'

The third endeavours a proof of the proposition denied,

'That the saints sin with their full and whole consent, by the example of David.'

For the first, he tells you, 'That the Spirit acts not to the utmost efficacy of its vigour and strength, but only when his preventing motions are entertained; and seconded, with a suitable concurrence in the hearts and wills of men; through a deficiency, and neglect whereof, he is said to be grieved, and quenched; i. e. to cease from other actings, or movings in men. This truth, is the ground of such and such sayings, in the Epistles of Paul; For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live; for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God,' &c.

Ans. The Spirit here intended by Mr. Goodwin, is the holy and blessed Spirit of grace. What his actings to the just efficacy of his vigour and strength are, Mr. Goodwin doth not explain, nor indeed (notwithstanding the seeming significancy of that expression), is able. It must be to act, either as much as he can, or as much as he will. That the Holy Spirit in opposing sin, acts to the utmost extent of his omnipotency in any, I suppose will not be affirmed. If it be as much as he will, then the sense is, he will not in such cases, act as much as he will; what that signifies, we want some other expressive phrase to declare. To let this pass; let us see in the next place, what his actings to this just efficacy are suspended upon, it is then in case 'his first preventing motions be received, and seconded.'

But then secondly, What are these 'first preventing motions' of the Spirit? And what is it to entertain them with a suitable concurrence of the will? For the first, Mr. Goodwin tells us in this section, they are 'motions of a cool and soft inspiration;' such cloudy expressions, in a thing of this moment, are we forced to embrace. 'Preventing motions of the Spirit,' are either internal physical acts in, with, and upon the wills of men, working in them to will and to do (called 'preventing' from the actings of the wills themselves), or they are moral insinuations and persuasions to good, according to the analogy of the doctrine Mr. Goodwin hath espoused; it is the latter only, that are here intended. The 'preventing motions of the Spirit,' are his moral persuasions of the will, to the good proposed to its consideration.

See then in the next place, what it is to 'second, and entertain these motions with a suitable concurrence in the heart and will;' now this must be, either to yield obedience to these motions, and do the good persuaded unto, or something else; if any thing else, we desire to know of Mr. Goodwin, what it is, and wherein it consists; if it be to do the good persuaded to, then what becomes I pray you of those 'subsequent helps,' which are suspended upon this obedience, when the thing itself is already performed, which their help and assistance is required unto? They may well be called 'subsequent motions,' which are never used nor applied, but when the things, whereunto they move, and provoke, are before-hand accomplished and performed, yea they are suspended on that condition.

Farther, Wherein do these 'subsequent helps' (as it is expressed) which move at a more high and glorious rate consist? We have had it sufficiently argued already to a thorough conviction of what is Mr. Goodwin's judgment in this matter; viz. that he acknowledgeth no operations in or upon the wills of men, but what are moral, by the way of persuasion; contending to the utmost efficacy of his vigour and strength in disputing, that there is an inconsistency between physical internal operations, in or upon the will of men, and moral exhortations, or persuasions, as to the production of the same effect. This then is the frame of this fine discourse; if upon the Spirit's first persuasion to good, men yield obedience and do it accordingly, the Spirit will then with more power and vigour, move them when they have done it, and persuade them to do it; that this discourse of his doth readily administer occasion, and advantage to retort upon him his third argument formerly considered, of imposing incoherent and inconsistent reasonings, and actings upon God in his dealings with men, the intelligent reader will quickly find out; and it were an easy thing to erect a theatre, and upon Mr. Goodwin's principles, to personate the Almighty, with an incongruous, and incoherent discourse; but we fear God.

Thirdly, That the Spirit is grieved with the sins of believers, and their walking unworthily of, or not answerably to, the grace they have received, is clear; Eph. iv. 31. The apostle admonisheth believers to abstain from the sins he

there enumerates, and consequently others of the like import, having put on and learned Christ, unto sanctification, that they do not grieve the Spirit, from whom they have received that great mercy and privilege of being sealed to the day of redemption. But that, therefore, the subsequent and more effectual motions of the Spirit, are not free as the first, but suspended on our performance of that which he first moves unto, and so, consequently, that there is neither first nor second motion of the Spirit, but may be rendered useless and fruitless, or be for ever prevented, is an argument not unlike that of the Papists, 'Peter, feed my sheep, therefore, the pope is head of the church.'

The ensuing discourse also is not to be passed without a little animadversion: thus then he proceeds; 'Believers,' saith he, 'do then mortify the deeds of the body by the Spirit, when they join their wills unto his, in his preventing motions of grace, and so draw and obtain farther strength and assistance from him, in order to the great and difficult work of mortification, in respect of which concurrence also with the Spirit, in his first and more gentle applications of himself to them, they are said to be led by the Spirit, as, in their comportments with him, in his higher and farther application, they become filled with the Spirit, according to the expression of the apostle, Be ye filled with the Spirit; i. e. follow the Spirit close in his present motions and suggestions within you, and you shall be filled with him, i. e. ye shall find him moving and assisting you upon all occasions at a higher and more glorious rate.'

Ans. First, What this 'joining of our wills to the will of the Spirit,' is, was in part manifested before; the will of the Spirit,' is, that we be mortified. His motions hereunto are his persuasions, that we be so; to join our wills to his, is, in our will, to answer the will of the Spirit; that is, upon the Spirit's motions we mortify ourselves. By this also he tells us, we draw or obtain farther strength or assistance from the Spirit, for that work which we have done already; but how so? why he tells you afterward, that this is the law of the Spirit. It seems then, that by doing one thing, we obtain or procure the assistance of the Spirit for another, and that by a law; I ask by what law? by the law of works? by that law the apostle tells you, that we do not at all re-

ceive the Spirit; therefore, by a parity of reason, we obtain not any farther supplies from him, by that law: by the law of faith or grace? that law knows nothing of such terms, as that we should, by any acting of ours, procure the Holy Spirit of God, which he freely bestows, according to the main tenor of that law. Farther; How is this second grace obtained, and what is the law of the Spirit therein? is it obtained *ex congruo*, or *ex condigno*? produce the rule of God's proceeding with his saints, or any of the sons of men, in the matter of any gracious behovement of his, and you will outdo whatever your predecessors, whether Pelagians, Papists, Arminians, or Socinians, could yet attain unto. Our Lord hath told us, 'that without him we can do nothing; yea, all our sufficiency is of God, and without him we cannot think a good thought; that he works in us to will and to do; not only beginning, but perfecting every good work, fulfilling in us all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power,' ascribing the whole of the great work of salvation to himself and his Holy Spirit, working freely and graciously, as he wills and pleaseth. Of this order of his dealing with men, that his first, or preventing grace should be free, but his subsequent grace procured by us, and bestowed on us according to our working, and co-operation with his first grace, invented by Pelagius, Julianus, and Celestinus, and here introduced anew by Mr. Goodwin, he informs us nothing at all. In brief, this whole discourse is the mere Pelagian figment, wrapped up in general, cloudy expressions, with allusions to some Scripture phrases (which profane as well as erring Spirits are prone to), concerning the bestowing of the grace of God, according to the differing deportments, and deservings of men, differencing themselves from others, and, in comparison of them, holding out what they have not received.

But, secondly, 'To answer the first and gentle motions of the Spirit, is to be led by him, and then we shall be filled by the Spirit.' But how doth Mr. Goodwin prove, that to be 'led by the Spirit,' is to answer his first gentle motions, and thereby to obtain his farther and more glorious actings and persuasions? Is it safe, thus to make bold with the word of God? or is not this to wrest it, as ignorant and unstable men do, unto perdition? Saints, 'being led by the

Spirit of God,' and 'walking after the Spirit,' are, in Rom. viii. expressions of that effectual sanctification exerting itself in their conversation and walking with God, which the Spirit of God worketh in them, and which is their duty to come up unto, in opposition to 'living or walking after the flesh.' If this now be attained, and the saints come up unto it, antecedently to the subsequent grace of the Spirit, what is that subsequent grace, which is so gloriously expressed, and wherein doth it consist? Neither doth that expression of 'led by the Spirit,' hold out the concurrence or comportment of their wills, as it is phrased, with the gentle motion of the Spirit, but the powerful and effectual operation of the Spirit, as to their holiness and walking with God. Πνεύματι Θεοῦ ἄγονται, is not, 'they comport or concur with the Spirit in his motions;' but by the Spirit they are acted, and carried out to the things of God. Neither hath this any relation to or coherence with that of the Ephesians, v. 18. 'Be filled with the Spirit;' neither is there any such intendment in the expression, as is here intimated, of a promise of receiving more of the Spirit, on condition of that compliance, concurrence, and comportance, with his motions, as is intimated. That the Spirit is sometimes taken for his graces, sometimes for his gifts, habitually, sometimes for his actual operations, is known. The apostle in that place dissuading the Ephesians from turning aside to such carnal, sinful refreshments, as men of the world went out unto, bids them, 'not be drunk with wine, wherein is excess,' but to be 'filled with the Spirit:' to take their refreshment in the joys of the Spirit, speaking to 'themselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs;' ver. 20. Could I once imagine that Mr. Goodwin had the least thought, that indeed there was any thing in the Scripture, looking towards his intendment in the producing of it, I should farther manifest the mistake thereof. To play thus with the word of God, is a liberty we dare not make use of yet.

Thirdly, He concludes, 'That the reason why believers are overcome by the lustings of the flesh, is not because the Spirit is not stronger than the flesh, but because men have more will to hearken to the lusts of the flesh, than to the Spirit.

Fortunam priami cantabo, et nobile bellum.'

This is the issue of all the former swelling discourse; men's sins are from their own wills, and not because the Spirit is not stronger than the flesh. And whoever doubted it; the conclusion you were to prove, is, 'That believers sin with their whole will and full consent of their wills, and that the new principle that is in them, doth not cause their wills to decline from acting in sin to the just efficacy of all their strength and vigour.' But of this οὐδὲ γρῦ, for the insinuation in that expression of the 'will hearkening to the lusts of the flesh, and not the lusting of the Spirit,' in a sovereign indifferency to both and a liberty for the performance of either, in a way exclusive of good or vicious habitual principles of operation in the will itself, I shall not now divert to the consideration of.

What else remains in this section, either doth not concern the business in hand, as the fine notions of the Spirit's return to move believers, when his motions have been rejected, with the manner whereof, according to his conception, must be afterward considered apart, as the fall of David into adultery and murder; if there be need to go forth to the consideration of his examples and instances: and therefore, I shall not longer insist upon it; only the close of it, consisting of an inference made from some words of Peter Martyr, deserves consideration. 'Upon David's sin,' saith he, 'Peter Martyr makes this observation, That the saints themselves being once fallen into sin, would always remain in the pollution of it, did not God by his mighty word bring them out of it; which saying of Martyr clearly also implies, that the saints many times sin with their whole wills and full consents, because were any part of their wills bent against the committing of the sin at the time when it is committed, they would questionless return to themselves and repent immediately after, the heat and violence of the lust being over, by reason of the satisfaction that hath been given thereunto.'

Ans. The close insinuation in Peter Martyr's words, of the saints sinning with their whole wills, and the logic of Mr. Goodwin's inference from them, I believe is very much hidden from the reader. To the theology of it, I say, that the saints παρὰ τὸ πλεῖστον, do immediately return to God by repentance (as Peter did) upon their surprisals into sin; nor have they any rest in a condition of the eclipse of the

God from them, as upon sin it is always
David's particular case, mention may after-
But the proof, 'that they sin with their
full consent, because they would continue
the Lord relieve and deliver them by his
is admirable. I would adventure to cast
into as many shapes as it is tolerably capable
hope to cause it to appear any way argu-
deny then that believers have any such power
ing in them, as whereby, without any new
Spirit or concurrence of actual grace, they
nd eventually recover themselves from any
Which supplies of the Spirit and grace we
oved, are freely promised to them in the co-
But what will here follow to the support-
oodwin's hypothesis, that therefore in all
ny of their sins, they 'sin with the full and
of their wills,' I suppose he alone knows.
He endeavours to take off that of the apostle,
20. from appearing against him in this cause
sinning with their whole wills and consents,
the things they do. To this end he tells us,
he apostle saith, The evil which I would not that
ning is not that he did that which, at the same
did it, he was not willing either in whole or in
but that he sometimes did that, upon a surprisal
on or through incogitancy, which he was not ha-
lling or disposed in the inward man to do: but
ys implies but that, at the time when he did the
aks of, he did it with the full and entire consent
ll.'

1. It is probable the apostle knew his own meaning,
how to express it, having so good a teacher to that
d purpose as he had; now he assures us, in the person
generate man, that as what he would he did not, so
he did, he would not, he hated it, ver. 15, 16. And again,
nd that which he would not, and therein consented to
by his not willing of that he did, that it was good;
ether it express not a renitency of the will, to that
as done in part, and so far as to make the action it-
s, and not to enwrap the whole consent of the will,

apostle, mentioned Rom. vii. I answer farther, that when he saith, The evil which I would not, that do I, he doth not speak of what he always and in all cases did, much less of what was possible for him to do, but of what he did ordinarily and frequently, or of what was very incident unto him, through the infirmity of the flesh, viz. through inconsiderateness and anticipation by temptations to do such things, which when he was in a watchful and considerate posture, and from under the malignant influence of a temptation, he was altogether averse unto: now what a man doth ordinarily is one thing, and what he doth sometimes and in some particular cases, especially what it is possible for him to do, is another. That true believers, whilst such, ordinarily sin not upon worse terms, than those mentioned by the apostle concerning his sinning, I easily grant; but it no ways followeth from hence, that therefore they never sin upon other terms, much less that it is impossible that they should sin upon others; and thus we see all things thoroughly and impartially argued, and debated to and fro, that even true believers themselves, as well as others, may do those works of the flesh, which exclude from the kingdom of God, and that, in respect thereof, they are subject to this exclusion as well as other men.'

The sum of this part of the reply is, that what Paul speaks is true, of the ordinary course of believers, but not of extraordinary surprisals; this seems, I say, to be the tendency of it, though the direct sense of the whole is not so obvious to me: by that expression, 'the evil that I would not, that I do,' you intend either the expression of 'he would not,' or 'that he did;' if the latter, then you say he did not sin ordinarily and frequently, but only upon surprisals, which is freely granted, but is not at all to your purpose, but rather much against it. If you attend that part of it, which holds out its renitency against the evil he did, in the expression of 'I would not,' then you say, it was not ordinary with the apostle to nill the evil that he did, but in [illegible] prisal to sin, which I believe is not intended; [illegible] dible, that any one should think that, in the [illegible] of a man's walking, there should be no [illegible] sin, the falling whereinto men are lia[illegible] and anticipations by temptation, as

Nor is it on the other side that he intends the things that he did ordinarily, but was surprised by temptation; then it might be otherwise. But, first, is a saint to be supposed to sin ordinarily, to sin not prevailed on by temptation? is not all sin from temptation? do they sin actually but upon the surprisal of temptation? To impose this upon the apostle, that he should say, Truly for the most part, or in my ordinary walking, I do not sin, but withal, I will it not, but when I am surprised with temptations, then it is otherwise with me, there is no renitency in my will to sin, is doubtless to wrong him; he doth not limit his not willing of the evil he did to any consideration whatever, but speaks it generally, as the constant state and condition of things with him.

Secondly, In the beginning of this section, the nilling of sin was antecedent to the sin: here, it is something that may be allowed in ordinary cases, but not at all in extraordinary; so that these two expositions put together amount to thus much. Ordinarily the apostle, antecedent to any sinning before the lusting of the Spirit ceased, did not will the thing that he did, which was evil, but in case of temptation it was not so; that is, antecedently to his acting of that which was evil, he had no opposition in the inward man unto it, nor lusting of the Spirit against it, which how it can be made good against him, whose heart is upright, and who hates every evil way, I know not.

Thirdly, It is confessed, that ordinarily believers sin at no worse a rate than that expressed by the apostle; but what doth that contain? It would not be referred to their doing of sins; then you grant that which all this while you have endeavoured to oppose, and are reconciled to your own contradiction in the first evidence, sin cannot ordinarily or extraordinarily be committed but by an act of the will, and yet ordinarily there is a dissent of the will also thereunto. If you adhere to your other former interpretation, that the willing against sin committed, is antecedent to the commitment of it, and laid asleep before the perpetration of any [illegible] then this also is imposed on you, that there are sins [illegible] may be surprised by temptations, that, an- [illegible]itment of them, they do not, not-will; [illegible]it lusteth not against the flesh;' [illegible]the flesh lusteth against the

Spirit and all the ways of it, and all the fruits thereof, and the Spirit lusteth against the flesh, with all its ways and fruits.

Fourthly, It appears then that this being the description of a regenerate man, which the apostle gives, as to indwelling sin, and all the fruits thereof, that it is most ridiculous to exempt his frame in respect of such sins as they may fall into by surprisals of temptations, from this description of him, and so to frame this distinction to the apostle's general rule, that it holds in cases ordinary, but not in extraordinary, when nothing in the whole context gives the least allowance or continuance to such a limitation.

It appears then notwithstanding any thing offered here to the contrary, upon due consideration of it, that believers sin not with their whole wills and full consents, at any time, nor under the power of what temptation soever they may fall for a season, and that because of the residence of this principle of a contrary tendency unto sin in their wills, which is always acting, either directly in inclining unto good, or in taking off, or making remiss, the consent of the will to sin, notwithstanding the prevalency of the principle opposite thereunto, by its committing of sin.

And hence have we sufficient light for the weakening of the argument proposed in the beginning of this chapter. For though it is weak in its foundation (as shall be shewed), concluding to what the saints may do, from what is forbidden them to do, that prohibition being the ordinance of God certainly to preserve them from it, yet taking it for granted that they may fall into the sin intimated, yet seeing they do it not customarily, not maliciously, not with the full and whole consent of their wills, that there is a principle in them still opposing sin, though at any time weakened by sin, and the conclusion of that argument concerns them not. I say then, first, to the major proposition, they who are in a capacity and possibility, that is, a universal possibility, not only in respect of an internal principle, but of all outward prohibiting causes, as the purpose and promise of God, of perpetrating the works of the flesh, not of bringing forth any fruits of the lusting of the flesh, which are in the best, willingly and ordinarily with the full and whole consent of their wills, in which sense alone such works of the flesh are

absolutely exclusive from the kingdom of heaven, they may possibly fall out of the favour of God and into destruction. This proposition being thus limited, and the terms of it cleared, for to cause it to pass; I absolutely deny the minor, that true believers do, or can so sin; that is, so bring forth the works of the flesh, as to leave no room for the continuance of mercy to them, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace.

But now frame the proposition so, as the assumption may comprise believers, and we shall quickly know what to judge of it; 'Those who are in a capacity or possibility of falling into such sins, as deserve rejection from God, or of perpetrating works of the flesh, though they do so overborne by the power of temptation, nilling the things they do, not abiding in their sins, may fall totally and finally from God: but believers may so do.' As the matter is thus stated, the assumption may be allowed to pass upon believers, but we absolutely deny the major proposition in the sense wherein it is urged. I shall only add, that when we deny that believers can possibly fall away, it is not any absolute impossibility we intend, nor an impossibility with respect to any principle in them, only that in and from itself is not perishable, nor an impossibility in respect of the manner of their acting, but such a one as, principally respecting the outward removing cause of such an actual defection, will infallibly prevent the event of it. And thus is the cloud raised by this fifth argument dispelled and scattered by the light of the very first consideration of the difference in sinning, that is, between regenerate and unregenerate men: so that it will be an easy thing to remove and take away what afterward is insisted on for the reinforcement and confirmation of the several propositions of it.

The major proposition he confirms from Gal. v. 21. Eph. v. 5, 6. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. all affirming, that neither whoremongers, nor adulterers, nor idolaters, nor the like, have any inheritance in the kingdom of God, or can be saved. That the intendment of the apostle is concerning them, who live in a course of such sins, who sin with their whole wills, and from an evil root, with whose sap they are wholly leavened and tainted throughout, not them who, through the strength of temptation, and the surprisals of it, not without the renitency

in their wills, unto all sin, any sin, the sin wherewith they are overtaken, may possibly fall into any such sin (as did David and Peter), was before declared, and in that sense we grant the proposition.

For the proof of the minor proposition, which should be, that believers may perpetrate the work of the flesh, in the sense intended in the places of Scripture before mentioned, he insists on two things. First, The direction of those Scriptures unto believers. Secondly, The experience of the ways of such persons, that is, of believers. The apostle tells believers, that they who commit such and such things, with such and such circumstances in their commitment, cannot be saved; therefore, believers may commit those sins in the manner intended. What hath been said before of the use of threatenings, and denunciations of judgments on impenitent sinners, in respect of believers, will give a sufficient account (if there be need of any) for our denial of this consequence; and for the second, that the experience of such men's ways and walking evinceth it; it is a plain begging of the thing under debate, and an assuming of that which was proposed to be proved, a thing unjustly charged by him on his adversaries, as though they should confess, that believers might sin to the extent of the lines drawn out in the places of Scripture mentioned, and yet not lose their faith, when, because they cannot lose their faith, they deny that they can sin to that compass of excess and riot intimated.

I cannot see, then, to what end and purpose the whole ensuing discourse, from the beginning of this argument to the end of the 21st sect. is. It is acknowledged that all those places do concern believers; the intendment of the Holy Ghost in them being to discover to them, the nature of the sin specified, and the end of the committing of them, in the way intended, and that God purposes to proceed according to the importance of what is threatened to those sins, so committed, with all that do them, that so they may walk watchfully and carefully, avoiding not only those things themselves, but all the ways and means leading to them (though if any one of them sin any of those sins without the deadly attendants of them mentioned in Scripture, they have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous); but that from thence it may be inferred, that believers may,

and some do sin, and that God intends, as it is expressed, to destroy them if they so do, when he hath promised they shall never do so, is a very weak and ridiculous argumentation: they are a medium of acquainting them with the desert of sin, the tenor of the law to them that are under it, and the riches of grace in their deliverance.

It is true, unbelievers are, as you say, 'in our judgment' (and I wonder what yours is in the case), 'in a state of exclusion from the kingdom of God, whether they perpetrate the works of the flesh mentioned or no:' unbelief is in our judgment, sufficient of itself to exclude any one from the kingdom of God. But yet withal in our judgment (and we desire to know yours) it is impossible that unbelievers (we mean those who are adults) should not perpetrate the same evils mentioned, or others of the same import, all the 'thoughts and imaginations of their hearts being evil, and that continually,' and thereupon be farther exposed to the wrath of God which is revealed against all that do evil. If therefore the discovery of a man's desperate condition, that he may be stirred up to labour and strive for a deliverance from it, doth concern him, then these and the like passages do properly and primarily concern unbelievers, whose state with the issue of it, is particularly described therein. And to say (as our author doth) 'that it is a vain thing for the Spirit of God to threaten wrath to men upon the committing of sin, if by unbelief they are exposed antecedently to that wrath,' is to question the wisdom of him with whom (whatever become of us poor worms) he cannot contend. He hath told us, that all men by nature are 'children of wrath and unclean,' so far as not to be able to enter into the kingdom of heaven, unless they be washed and born again, and yet we hope, without the least deficiency in wisdom, hath farther revealed his wrath from heaven, against the ensuing ungodliness that is committed by these children of wrath, to be executed in tribulation and anguish against every soul that so doth evil. Not to detain the reader, what hath been said, and shall farther be argued, concerning the difference that is between believers and unbelievers in their sinning, with that also which hath been spoken of the concernment of believers, in these and the like passages of Scripture, sufficiently arguing that no such inference as is made for the con-

firmation of the assumption of the argument under consideration according to Mr. Goodwin's thoughts and apprehensions of it, can possibly be drawn out from them.

Sect. 22. is a pretty pageant, and by the reader's favour I shall shew it him once more. 'If it be objected that true believers have a promise from God that they shall never lose their faith, I answer, first, That this hath oft been said, but never so much as once proved. Secondly, Upon examination of those Scriptures wherein such promises of God are pretended to reside, or to be found, we find no such thing in them, we find indeed many promises of their perseverance, but all of them conditional, and such whose performance in respect of actual and complete perseverance, is suspended upon the diligent and careful use of means by men to persevere. And lastly, to affirm that true believers can by no commission of sin or sins whatsoever, how frequently soever reiterated, how long continued in soever, ever make shipwreck of their faith or fall away from the grace and favour of God so as to perish, what is it but to provoke the flesh to an outrageousness in sinning, and to encourage that which remains of the old man in them to bestir itself in all ways of unrighteousness? And doubtless the bringing of that doctrine hath been the casting of a snare upon the world, and hath caused many, whose feet God hath guided into ways of peace, to adventure so far into desperateness of sinning, that, through the just judgment of God, their hearts never served them to return.'

Ans. First, The foundation of this whole discourse, is a supposal of promises of preserving believers in their faith, upon the ridiculous supposition after mentioned, to be asserted by the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, and the defenders of it, which Mr. Goodwin knows full well to be far otherwise.

Secondly, It hath sufficiently been proved, that believers have a promise, yea many promises, to be kept by the power of God, from all and any such sin, or any such circumstance of sin, or continuance in sin, as is wholly inconsistent with believing, and that therefore they shall be preserved in believing.

Thirdly, Upon our calling the examination of the proofs of this assertion to an account, we have found them to be

made up of trivial exceptions and sophistical suppositions, confident beggings, and cravings of the things under contest and debate (all the endeavours to prove the promises of perseverance to be conditional, having also involved in them an absolute contradiction to the truth and to themselves), no way sufficient to evince, that the promises and work of God's grace are suspended, upon any conditions in men whatsoever.

And, fourthly, We say, that the intrusion of this vain hypothesis, that believers should continue so, under the consideration here intimated by you of sin, when the main of the doctrine contended for, consists in a full and plain denial that they can, or shall, fall under them (according to the import of 1 John iii. 9. immediately to be insisted on, being preserved by the Spirit and grace of him who so works his law in their hearts, that they shall never depart from him), is the great engine you have used in all your attempts against it, being indeed a mere begging of the thing in question.

Fifthly, That there is nothing in this doctrine, in the least, suited to turn aside the saints of God from the holy commandment, but that, on the contrary, it is of an excellent usefulness, and effectual influence for the promotion of all manner of godliness, in those that are truly saints, howsoever any man may abuse it (as any other discovery of the grace of God), turning it into lasciviousness, hath been declared: what use hath been made of the contrary doctrine in the world, we have hitherto had experience; only in the Pelagians, Papists, Socinians, and Arminians, and with what fruits of it they have abounded, the church of God doth partly know: what it is like to bring forth, being now translated into another soil, or rather, having won over to it men sometimes of another profession, is somewhat, though not altogether, yet in obeyance.

Let us then, with the apostle, having proceeded thus with Mr. Goodwin, that a foundation may be the better laid, for the removal of what he farther adds, proceed to consider the progress of sin, and to remark from thence the difference that is between regenerate and unregenerate men in their sinning.

The second thing proposed in the apostle's discourse of

the rise and progress of sin, is the general way that lust proceedeth in, for the bringing of it forth, and that is temptation; 'Every one is tempted of his own lust:' this is the general way that lust proceeds in, for the production of actual sin; it tempts, and he in whom it is, is tempted; there is a temptation unto sin only, and a temptation unto sin by sin; the first is no sin in him that is so tempted; our Saviour was so tempted; 'he was tempted of the devil;' Matt. iv. 1. 'He was in all points tempted like as we are, without sin:' that his temptations were unto sin, is apparent from the story of them; 'but the prince of this world coming had nothing in him;' John xiv. 30. found nothing in him to answer and close with his temptations; and therefore, though he was tempted, yet was he without sin. Now though this sort of temptations from Satan, are not originally our sins, but his, yet there being tinder in our souls that kindles more or less, in and upon every injection of his fiery darts, there being something in us to meet many, if not all, of his temptations, they prove, in some measure, in the issue, to be ours: indeed Satan sometimes ventures upon us, in things wherein he hath doubtless small hope of any concurrence, and so seems rather to aim at our disquiet, than our sins; as in those whom he perplexes with hard and blasphemous thoughts of God, a thing so contradictory to the very principles not of grace only, but of that whereby we are men, that it is utterly impossible there should be any assent of the soul thereunto; to think of God, as God, is to think of him every thing that is good, pure, great, excellent, incomprehensible in all perfection: now at the same time, to have any apprehensions of a direct contradictory importance, the mind of man is not capable. Were it not for the unbelief, causeless fears, and discontentments, that in many do ensue upon temptations of this nature, which are consequents, and not effects of it, Satan might keep this dart in his own forge, for any mischief he is like to do with it. The apostle speaks here of temptations by sin as well as unto sin; and these are men's sins, as well as their temptations; they are temptations, as tending to farther evil; they are sins, as being irregular and devious from the rule. Now this tempting of lust compriseth two things.

First, The general active inclination of the heart unto

sin, though not fixed as unto any particular act, or way of sin; the 'motus primo primi;' of this you have that testimony of God concerning man, in the state of nature; Gen. vi. 5. 'Every figment of the thought of his heart, is only evil every day;' the figment or imagination of the thoughts, is the very root of them; their general moulding, or active preparing of the mind, for the exerting of them; so 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. 'God understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts:' the figment of them; the next disposition of the soul unto them; and 2 Chron. xxix. 19. 'Keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of their hearts,' or keep their hearts in a continual framing posture and condition, of such good thoughts. This, I say, is the first way of lust's, temptation; it makes a mint of the heart, to frame readily all manner of evil desires and thoughts, that they may as our Saviour speaks 'proceed out of the heart;' Matt. xv. 19. Their actual fixing on any object, is their proceeding, antecedent whereunto they are framed and formed in the heart; lust actually disposeth, inclines, bends, the heart to things suitable to itself, or the corrupt habitual principle which hath its residence in us.

Secondly, The actual tumultuating of lust, and working with all its power and policy, in stirring up, provoking to, and drawing out, thoughts and contrivances of sin, with delight and complacency in inconceivable variety; the several degrees of its progress herein being afterward described.

In the first of these there is no small difference between regenerate and unregenerate persons, and that in these two things.

First, In its universality. In unregenerate men, 'every figment of their heart is only evil and that every day;' there is a universality of actings expressed positively, and exclusively, to any actings of another kind; 'every figment of their heart is only evil;' and of time, 'every day;' whatever good they seem to do, or do, whatever duties they perform, that in them all, which is the proper figment of their heart, is only evil. On this account, take any duty they do, any work they perform, and weigh it in the balance, and it will be found in respect of principles, and circumstances, or aims, to be wholly evil; that indeed there is nothing in it that is acceptable to God; and their hearts are casting, minting,

and coining sin, all the day long. With believers it is not so, there is also a good treasure in their hearts, from whence they bring out good things; there is a good root in them that bears good fruit: though they are, or may be overtaken with many sins, yea with great sins, yet lust doth not tempt them as it doth unregenerate men, with a perpetual continual active inclination unto evil, even some way or other in all the good they do. The Spirit is in them, and will, and doth, in what state soever they are, dispose their hearts to faith, love, meekness, and actuates those graces, at least in the elicit acts of the will; for 'a good tree will bring forth good fruit.' Never any believer is or was so deserted of God, or did so forsake God, as that every 'figment of his heart should be evil only, and that continually;' that no one act of sin can possibly expel his habit of grace, hath been formerly shewed; neither is he ever cast into such a condition, but from the good principle that is in him. There is a panting after God, longing for his salvation with more or less efficacy; the spark is warm and glowing, though under ashes.

Secondly, In respect of power. Lust tempts in unregenerate men out of an absolute uncontrollable dominion, and that with a morally irresistible efficacy; all its dominion, as hath been shewed, and very much of its strength is lost in believers; this is the intendment of the apostle's discourse Rom, vi. concerning the crucifying of sin, by the death of Christ. The power, strength, vigour, and efficacy, of it, is so far abated, weakened, mortified, that it cannot so effectually impel unto sin, as it doth when it is in perfect life and strength.

But you will say then, If lust be thus weakened in believers, more than in others, how comes it to pass, that they do at any time fall into such great and heinous sins, as sometimes they do, and have done? Will not this argue them to be even worse than unregenerate persons, seeing they fall into sin upon easier terms, and with less violence of impulse from indwelling sin than they?

Ans. First, The examples of believers falling into great sins, are rare, and such as by no means are to be accommodated to their state, in their ordinary walking with God. It true there are examples of such falls recorded in the Scrip-
, that they might light lie as buoys to all generations, to

caution men of their danger, when the waves of temptation arise, to shew what is in man, in the best of men, to keep all the saints of God humble, self-empty, and in a continual dependance on him, in whom are all their springs, from whom are all their supplies; but as they are mostly all Old Testament examples, before grace for grace was given out by Jesus Christ, so they are by no means farther to be urged, nor are, but only to shew that it is possible that God can keep alive the root, when the tree is cut down to the ground; and cause it to bud again by the scent of the water of his Spirit, flowing towards it.

Secondly, That believers fall not into great sins at any time, by the mere strength of indwelling sin, unless it be in conjunction with some violent outward temptation, exceedingly surprising them, either by weakening all ways and means whereby the principle of grace should exert itself, as in the case of Peter; or by sudden heightening of their corruption by some overpowering objects, attended with all circumstances of prevalency, not without God's withholding his special grace in an eminent manner, for ends best known to himself, as in the case of David. Hence it is, that even in such sins, we say, they sin out of infirmity, that is, not out of propense deliberation as to sin; not out of malice, not out of love to, or delight in sin; but merely through want of strength, when overborn by the power of temptations.

This Mr. Goodwin frames as an objection to himself, in the pursuit of the vindication of the argument under considerations; sect. 23.

'Others plead that there is no reason to conceive that true believers, though they perpetrate the works of the flesh, should be excluded from the kingdom of heaven upon this account; because when they sin in this kind, they sin out of infirmity, and not out of malice.'

Ans. I was not to choose what objections Mr. Goodwin should answer, nor had the framing of them which he chose to deal withal; and, therefore, must be contented with them, as he is pleased to afford them to us; only if I may be allowed to speak in this case, and I know I have the consent of many concerned in it, I should somewhat otherwise frame this objection or answer; being partly persuaded, that Mr. Goodwin did not find it, but framed it himself, into the shape

wherein it here appears. I say then, that the saints of God sin out of infirmity only, not maliciously, nor *dedita opera* in cool blood, nor with their whole hearts, but purely upon the account of the weakness of their graces, being overpowered by the strength of temptation, and therefore cannot so perpetrate the works of the flesh, and in such a way as must according to the tenor of the covenant wherein they walk with God, not only deserve rejection and damnation, but also be absolutely and indispensably exclusive of them, from the kingdom of God. What Mr. Goodwin hath drawn forth to take off, in any measure, the truth of this assertion, shall be considered. He says then,

'To say that true believers, or any other men do perpetrate the works of the flesh, out of infirmity, involves a contradiction: for to do the works of the flesh, implies the dominion of the flesh in the doers of them, which in sins of infirmity hath no place; the apostle clearly insinuates the nature of sins of infirmity in that to the Galatians; Beloved if any man be overtaken with a fault (προλημφθῃ), be prevented, or taken at unawares. When a man's foot is taken in the snare of a temptation, only through a defect of that spiritual watchfulness over himself and his ways which he ought to keep constantly, and so sinneth contrary to the habitual and standing frame of his heart, this man sinneth out of infirmity; but he that thus sinneth cannot in Scripture phrase be said either to walk, or to live according to the flesh, or to do the works of the flesh, or to do the lusts or desires of the flesh, because none of these are any where ascribed unto, or charged upon, true believers, but only upon such persons who are enemies unto God, and children of death.'

Ans. This being the substance of all that is spoken to the business in hand, I have transcribed it at large, that with its answer it may at once lie under the reader's view. I say then,

First, We give this reason that believers, 'cannot perpetrate the works of the flesh' in the sense contended about, because they sin out of infirmity, and do not say that they so 'perpetrate the works of the flesh out of infirmity.' But if by perpetrating the works of the flesh, you intend only the bringing forth at any time, or under any temptation whatsoever, any fruits of the flesh, such as every sin is, that this may not be

done out of infirmity, or that it involves a contradiction to say so, is indeed not to know what you say, to contradict yourself, and to deny that there be any sins of infirmity at all, which that there are you granted in the words foregoing, and describe the nature of it in the words following. They doubtless in whom the flesh always lusteth against the Spirit are sometimes led away and enticed by their own lusts, so as to bring forth the fruits of it.

Secondly, If 'to do the works of the flesh,' imports with you, as indeed in itself it doth, the predominancy and dominion of the flesh in them that do the works thereof, we wholly deny that believers can so do the works of the flesh; as upon other reasons, so partly because they sin out of infirmity, which sufficiently argues that the flesh hath not the dominion in them; for then they should not through infirmity be captivated to it, but should willingly yield up their 'members, as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin.'

Thirdly, The description you give of a sin of infirmity from Gal. vi. 1. is that alone which we acknowledge may befall believers, though it hath sometimes befallen them in greater sins. It is evident from hence, that a sin becometh a sin of infirmity, not from the nature of it, but from the manner of men's falling into it. The greatest actual sin, may be a sin of infirmity, and the least, a sin of presumption. It is possible a believer may be overtaken, or rather surprised, with any sin, so he be overtaken or surprised. A surprisal into sin through the power of temptation, subtilty of Satan, strength of indwelling sin, contrary to the habitual standing frame of the heart (not always neither through a defect of watchfulness), is all that we grant a believer may be liable to: and so upon Mr. Goodwin's confession, he sins only out of infirmity; such sins being not exclusive of the love and favour of God. And, therefore,

Fourthly, We say that true believers cannot be said to walk 'according to the flesh,' to do the 'works of the flesh,' to do the 'lusts and desires of the flesh,' which the Holy Ghost so cautions them against; which, as Mr. Goodwin observes, are none of them charged upon true believers, but only such persons as are enemies of God, and children of wrath; so that those expressions hold out to believers only what they

ought to avoid in the use of the means which God graciously affords them; and do not discover any thing of the will of God, that he will suffer them, contrary to his many faithful promises, to fall into them. And so the close of this discourse is contrary to the beginning, Mr. Goodwin granting that true believers cannot fall into these sins, but only such as are enemies to God; and yet he hath no way to prove that true believers may cease to be so, but because they may fall into these sins, which that they may do, he here eminently denies. Wherefore he adds:

'If by sinning out of malice they mean sinning with deliberation, with plotting, and contriving the methods and means of their sinning; sinning against judgment, against the dictates of conscience (and what they should mean by sinning out of malice but sinning upon such terms as these I understand not), certain it is that true believers may so sin out of malice, or at least such as were true believers before such sinning, and this our adversaries themselves confess.'

Ans. All this falls heavy on the shoulders (as it is supposed) of poor David, and yet we think it evident, that God 'took not his Holy Spirit from him,' but that his covenant continued with him, 'ordered in all things and sure,' and that 'sin had not dominion over him.' The reasons of this persuasion of ours concerning him, shall farther be insisted on, when we come to the consideration of his case in particular; in the mean time I confess the dreadful falls of some of the saints of God, are rather to be bewailed than aggravated; and the riches of God's grace in their recovery, to be admired than searched into. Yet we say,

First, That no one believer whatever in the world, upon any temptation whatever, did fall into any sin of malice, that is, accompanied with any hatred of God, or despite of his grace, or whole delight of his will in the sin, whereunto he was by temptation for a season captivated; and though they may fall into sin, against their judgments and dictates of their consciences, as every sin whatever, that they have, or may have knowledge of, or acquaintance with, in their own hearts and ways, is; yet this doth not make them to sin out of malice; for that would leave no distinction between sins of infirmity, whereinto men are surprised by temptation, and

of malice. Even sins of infirmity being in general and particular directly contrary to the dictates of their enlightened, sanctified judgments and consciences.

Secondly, For sinning 'with deliberation, plotting, and contriving the methods and means of sinning' (the proof whereof, that so they may do, will lie as was before observed, on the instance of David), I say it being the will of God for ends and purposes known to his infinite wisdom, to give us, as to his fall, his dark side, and his sin to the full, with the temptations wherewith he was at first surprised; and afterward violently hurried upon carnal reasonings and considerations of the state whereinto he had cast himself, having lost his old friend and counsellor as to any shines of his countenance for a season, not acquainting us at all with the frame, and working, and striving of his Spirit, in, and under that fall; I shall not dare to draw his case into a rule, that what he then did a believer now may do, judging of his frame in doing of it, only by what is expressed. That believers may have *morosam cogitationem*, or deliberation upon some sins, whereunto they are tempted, upon the strength of indwelling sin, which may possibly so overcome and prevail against the workings of grace for a season, as to set the flesh at liberty to make contrivances to fufil the lusts thereof, I say, many have granted, and I shall not (for the sake of poor returning souls, whose backslidings God hath promised to heal) deny; but yet I say, all their actings in this kind, are but like the desperate actings of a man in a fever, who may have some kind of contrivance with himself to do mischief (as I have known some myself), and aim at opportunities for the accomplishment of it; all the faculties of their souls being discomposed, and rendered unserviceable to them through their distemper; through the violence of temptation, and the tumultuating of lusts, the whole new man may be for a season so shattered, and his parts laid out of the way, as to such a due answering to another, that the whole may be serviceable to the work of faith (as a disordered army, wherein is all its fundamental strength as well as when it is rallied in battalia, is altogether unserviceable, until it be reduced to order), that sin taking the opportunity to fill their corrupt part (as far as it is corrupt) with its pleasure and desirableness, and so to set the

thoughts of it on work to continue means for its accomplishment. Now as through the goodness of their Father, and supplies of grace, which through the covenant thereof, they do receive, this distemper seizeth not believers but rarely and extraordinarily, so it doth no way prove them to sin with malice, or without hatred of, and opposition (secret opposition, which may be as secret, as some inclinations to sin are not known to ourselves) to, the things they do in and under that condition.

That which follows in this section being suited to the apprehension of some particular men, though of great name and esteem, according to their worth and desert in the church of God, as Ursin, Paræus, and the rest, about reigning sin; wherein (as I have declared) my thoughts fall not in with them, I shall not need to insist any longer upon it. Paræus, after all his aggravations of the sins of believers, yet adds that they sin not (nor did David) *ex contemptu Dei*, but through a preoccupation or surprisal of sin; which I believe to be the persuasion of far the greatest number of saints in the world, whatever Mr. Goodwin is pleased to think or say to the contrary. Nor is their apprehension weakened by Nathan's charging upon David, 'his despising of the commandment of the Lord' in doing evil; which, as it is virtually done in every sin, and in great sins in an eminent manner, so that it did amount indeed, not only to a consequential but a formal voluntary contempt of God, Mr. Goodwin shall never prove. A father often and severely chargeth upon his son a despising of his commands, when he hath been carried out to transgress it, when yet he knows his son honoureth and reverenceth him in his heart, and is exceedingly remote from any resolved contempt of him.

The close of all is a concession of the contra-remonstrants at the Hague conference; 'that believers might fall into such sins, as that the church according to the commandment of Christ, must pronounce that they shall no longer abide in her communion, and that they shall have no part in the kingdom of Christ;' which being made an argument for the apostacy of the saints, I shall consider how it is here improved by Mr. Goodwin.

'Certainly,' saith he, 'their sense was, that true believers may sin above the rate of those who sin out of infirmity,

insomuch as there is no commandment of Christ, that any church of his should eject such persons out of their communion, who sin out of infirmity only; so that by the confession of our adversaries themselves, even true believers may perpetrate such sins, which are of a deeper demerit, than to be numbered amongst sins of infirmity; yea such sins, for which the church of Christ, according to the commandment of Christ, stands bound to judge them for ever excluded from the kingdom of God without repentance; from whence it undeniably follows, that they may commit such sins, whereby their faith in Christ will be totally lost, because there is no condemnation unto those that are by faith in Jesus Christ, whether they repent or not, and therefore they that stand in need of repentance, to give them a right and title to the kingdom of God, are no sons of God by faith; for were they sons, they would be heirs also, and consequently have right and title to the inheritance; so that to pretend that howsoever the saints may fall into great and grievous sins, yet they shall certainly be renewed again by repentance before they die, though this be an assertion without any bottom on reason or truth, yet doth it no ways oppose, but suppose rather a possibility of the total defection of faith in true believers.'

Ans. First, That true believers may sin above the rate of sins of infirmity, because they may so sin, as that according to the appointment of Jesus Christ, they may be cast out of a particular church, is not attempted to be proved. Doth Mr. Goodwin think none may be excommunicated but such as have sinned themselves out of the state of grace? That a man may through infirmity, fall into some such sin, as for it to be amoved from a church society (that amotion being an ordinance of Christ, for his recovery from that sin), I know not that it can be reasonably questioned. So that by our confession, that true believers may so sin, as to be righteously cast out of the external visible society of a particular church, doth no way enforce us to acknowledge that they may sin above the rate of them, who are overtaken with, or surprised in sin, upon the account of their weakness or infirmity.

Secondly, The church of Christ in rejecting of one from its society, according to the appointment of Jesus Christ, is

so far from being obliged to judge any one for ever excluded from the kingdom of God; that they do so reject a man, that he may never be excluded from that kingdom. It is true, he may be ecclesiastically and declaratively excluded from the visible kingdom of God, and his right and title to the outward administration of the good things thereof; but that such a one is, and must be thought to be, properly and really excluded from his interest in the love of God, and grace of the covenant (being still by the appointment of God, and command of Christ, left under the power of an ordinance, annexed by him), to the administration of that covenant, it doth not follow.

Thirdly, The non-restoration of persons cast out of communion by the church, to their place in the kingdom of God, but upon repentance, holds proportion with what was spoken before upon exclusion. The repentance intended is such as is necessary for the satisfaction of the church, as to its expressness and being known; yet we grant withal, that all sins whatever without repentance, in that kind and degree, that is appointed and accepted of God, are exclusive of the kingdom of God; and we do much wonder that Mr. Goodwin to the text, Rom. viii. 1. should add, 'whether they repent or not' which is not only beyond the sense of what went before, but directly contrary to that which follows after, 'that walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.' Not to repent of sin, is doubtless to 'walk after the flesh,' and no one of them who are freed from condemnation in Christ, doth good and sinneth not: the words we confess, are not the condition in the intention of God, on which their non-condemnation is suspended, but yet they are a description infallible of them, who through grace are made partakers of it. We say then, that believers may so fall, as that being on that account rejected from the communion of the church, so as not to be restored, but upon the evidence of their repentance (and we say that repentance is required for all sins, or men cannot be saved, wondering what Mr. Goodwin, according to his principles intends by the addition to the text of Rom. viii. 1. unless it be, that no man stands in need of repentance, unless he have cast off all faith and interest in God; a most anti-evangelical assertion), and yet not commit such sins, as whereby their faith must needs be wholly lost.

Fourthly, There is a twofold right and title to the kingdom of God; a right and title by the profession of a true faith to the external kingdom of God, in regard of its outward administration, and a right and title to the eternal kingdom of God by the possession of a true faith in Christ. The former, as it is taken for *jus in re*, believers may loose for a season; though they may not in respect of a remote, original, fundamental root which abides; the latter they never loose, nor forfeit: we say also that repentance for sin being a thing promised of God, for those that come to him in Christ, upon the account of the engagement of his grace for the perseverance of believers; all such fallers into sin, shall certainly return to the Lord by repentance, who heals their backslidings, which Mr. Goodwin hath not been able to disprove; of whose arguments, and his endeavours to vindicate them from exceptions, this is the chief.

But yet there being two or three things that Mr. Goodwin is pleased to add to what went before, as objections against his doctrine in general, though not of this last argument's concernment, any more than of any others he makes use of, because there are in them considerations of good advantage to the truth in hand, I shall a little insist upon them, before I proceed with my intended discourse.

The first is, that the 'doctrine of the saints' apostacy, maimeth or dismembereth the body of Christ, and brings in an uncouth and unseemly interchange of members between Christ and the soul;' which howsoever slighted by Mr. Goodwin, is a plea not of the least importance in the case in hand. The body of Christ intended, is that mystical and spiritual, not that political and visible; his body in respect of the real union of every member of it, unto him as the head described by the apostle in its relation unto him; Eph. iv. 15, 16. 'It grows up unto him in all things which is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love:' so also, Col. ii. 19. The body we intend, whereof Christ is the head, is that, not only in a political sense, as the supreme governor of it, but in a spiritual, according to the analogy of a head natural, from whence life and all influence of it

unto the members do flow. Of this body, some are in their spirits already consummated, and made perfect in heaven; some are as yet pursuing their warfare in all parts of the world, pressing forward to the mark of the high-calling set before them. Now that any member of his body, 'bone of the bone, flesh of the flesh of Christ,' given him to make up his fulness, and mystical perfection jointed unto him, washed in his blood and loved by him, according to the love and care of a head to its members, should be plucked off, to be cast into the fire; and after it hath so closely and vitally been admitted into the participation of his fulness and increase, being united to him, become a child of the devil, an enemy to him, and sometimes fellow-members, so as to hate his head, and to be hated of his head (when yet no man ever yet hated his own flesh), this we suppose no way to answer that inexpressibly intense love, which the Lord Jesus bears towards his members, and to be exceedingly derogatory to his honour and glory, in reference with his dealing to Satan, the great enemy of his kingdom. But to this Mr. Goodwin answers:

First, 'For dismembering the body of Christ, is it not the law of Christ himself in every particular church or body of his, that as any of their members putrify and discover themselves to be rotten and corrupt, they should be cut off by the spiritual sword of excommunication, and doth not such a dismembering as this, rather tend to the honouring and adorning the body of Christ, than any ways to maim or deform it? And for such a dismembering of the body of Christ which the doctrine in hand supposeth to be causable by the members themselves, by the voluntary disfaithing of themselves through sin and wickedness; neither is the permission of this, upon such terms as it is permitted, either unworthy Christ or inconvenient to the body itself.' Reply,

First, That there is no argument will tolerably arise from what is practicable and comely in a visible ecclesiastical body of Christ, to the mystical spiritual body; that is, from a particular visible to the catholic church of Christ. As to the matter in hand, this is evident by the light of this single consideration, that in such an ecclesiastical body of Christ, there are always or may be, and Christ himself in the rules and laws that he hath given for the government thereof did

suppose that there always would be, good and bad, true saints and empty professors; whereas in the body whereof we treat, there is no soul actually instated, but who is actually united to the head, by the inhabitation of the same Spirit. There never was nor shall to eternity any dead member be of that body. They are all living stones, built upon him who is the foundation. Now surely this is an inference attended with darkness to be felt, because it may be comely for those to whom the administration of ordinances in the visible church of Christ is committed, to cut off a dead member from the membership which he holds by his confession of the faith, when he discovers himself not to answer the confession he hath made in his walking and conversation. Therefore, Christ himself doth cut off, or one way or other, loose any living members of his body mystical, and actually by faith instated in the unity of his body with him. And if it shall be objected that even living members, and such as are truly so, may yet for and at a season, be cut off from a visible particular body of Christ; I answer,

1. It is true, they may so, in respect of their ordinary present right to the enjoyment of ordinances, not in respect of their remote fundamental right that still abides.

2. They are so, or may be so, for their amendment, not for their destruction. That separation for a season being an expression of as much love and tenderness to them in Christ, as his joining of them to the body was from whence they are so separated. And,

3. This makes not at all to the impairing of the true completeness of the mystical body of Christ and the perfection of its parts; for as in particular visible bodies of Christ there may be, and are, dead members which have no place in the body, but are as excrescencies in the vine, and yet the body is not rendered monstrous by them; so a true member may be removed and the body not to be maimed in the least: the member, though perhaps from any such visible body, for a season, and yet the true spiritual sick and pining, continuing a member thereof still. Now there is nothing of all this that will in any measure agree to the plucking off a member from the mystical body of Christ, whereof alone we speak. If any should be so separated, it must not only be to his present actual enjoyment of union, but to the

loss of his Spirit also, and with him of all right and title, plea, or claim whatever to any interest therein. Neither is it possible that it should be a means for the correction and amendment of such a one; it lying in a direct tendency to inevitable destruction; separation from all interest in Christ can look no other way; so that still the uncouthness of such a procedure abideth.

Secondly, The reason that is added to put some colour and gloss upon this assertion. viz. 'That such persons as are affirmed to be so separated from the body of Christ, do voluntarily disfaith (as it is called) themselves, is not to the purpose in hand.' For,

1. The question is, about the thing itself, whereunto this answer *de modo*, is not satisfactory; it is urged by the argument, that it cannot be allowed any way, the answer is, it is done this way.

2. Were Mr. Goodwin desired to explain unto us the manner how believers voluntarily do, or may disfaith themselves, I suppose he would meet with no small difficulties in the undertaking. However this sounds handsomely.

3. That they should so disfaith themselves, through sin and wickedness, without being overcome by the temptations of Satan, and the power of the enemies with whom they have to do and wrestle, doubtless will not be affirmed, whilst they continue in their right wits, and if they lose them, it will be difficult to manifest how they can voluntarily disfaith themselves. The state wherein they are described to be by Mr. Goodwin, and the considerations which for their preservation he allows them, should not, methinks, suffer him to suppose that of their own accord, without provocations or temptations, they will wilfully ruin their own souls. Now that believers should by the power of any temptation or opposition whatever, or what affliction soever, arising against them, be prevailed upon to the loss of their faith, and so to their dismembering from Christ, is that which is objected as an unseemly uncouth thing, which in this answer Mr. Goodwin earnestly begs may not be so esteemed, and more he adds not as yet.

The following discourse wherein he pursues the business in hand, is so pretty, as that I cannot but once more present it to the reader. Saith he,

'As to a politic or civil corporation, it is better that the governors should permit the members respectively to go or be at liberty, that so they may follow their business and occupations in the world upon the better terms, though by occasion of this liberty they may behave themselves in sundry kinds very unworthily; than it would be to keep them close prisoners, though hereby the said inconveniences certainly be prevented; in like manner it is much better for the body of Christ, and for the respective members of it, that he should leave them at liberty to obey and serve God, and follow the important affairs of their souls freely and without any physical necessitation, though some do turn this liberty into wantonness, and so into destruction, than it would be to deprive them of this liberty and to cause and constrain them to any course whatsoever out of necessity: though it is true the committing of much sin and iniquity would be prevented hereby in many; the dismembering of the body of Christ's apostles, by the apostacy of Judas was no disparagement either to Christ himself, or it.'

Ans. The sum of the whole discourse is, that the Lord Jesus Christ hath no way to keep and secure his members to himself, that none of them perish, but by taking away their liberty which rather than do, it is more to his honour to let them abuse it, to their everlasting destruction; and to this end sundry fine supposals are scattered through the whole discourse. As,

1. That the liberty of believers is a liberty to sin, which they may abuse to their own destruction. The apostle is of another mind; Rom. vi. 17—19. 'God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine, which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness,' &c. 2. That there is no real efficacy of grace that will certainly fulfil in believers the good pleasure of God's goodness, and bring forth the fruits of an abiding holiness, but what must needs deprive them in whom it is of their liberty: and suitably hereunto; 3. That God having through Christ made his saints spiritually free from sin unto righteousness, so that with the utmost liberty that they are capable of as creatures, they shall surely do good, cannot by his Spirit continue them in that condition, infallibly without the destruction of their liberty. 4. That the spiritual operation of

God in and with the wills of men, induceth a necessitation as to their manner of operation, that they must act on that account, as necessary and not as free agents: with such other the like supposals, which are so many gross figments whereof Mr. G. shall be able to prove no one to eternity. For the removal then of all the fine words here tendered out of our way, it may suffice to tell their author, that he who is made redemption to his saints, that sets them free from their bondage to sin, by his Spirit, which is always accompanied with liberty, and makes them willing, ready, and free to righteousness and holiness in the day of his power towards them, whose effectual grace enlargeth and improves all their faculties in their operations, with the choicest attendances as to the manner of their working, can, and doth, by, in, and with, the perfect exercise of their liberty, keep them to himself, in their union and communion with him for ever. That this pretended liberty unto sin, is a bondage from which Christ frees his saints, neither is any thing that can be imagined more derogatory to the glory of his grace, than to affirm, that he cannot keep those committed to him infallibly to the end, without depriving them of the liberty which they have alone through him. Of physical necessitation enough hath been spoken before; Judas was never a member of the body of Christ, or of Christ in the acceptation whereof we speak. By the body of the apostles, is intended only their number, of which Judas (though he was never of that body whereof they were members) was one.

Farther, the wickedness of this apprehension, that Christ should loose any of those, who are true and living members of his mystical body, is aggravated upon the account of that state and condition, whereinto he parts with them. They being thereby made members of Satan, and his kingdom; God and the devil so interchanging children to the great dishonour and reproach of his name: to this Mr. Goodwin replies, in the twenty-eighth section.

'For the interchange of members between Christ and Satan, the Scripture presenteth it as a thing possible, yea, as frequent and ordinary; Know ye not (saith the apostle) that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? In the original it is, Ἆραϛ οὖν τὰ μέλη τοῦ Χριστοῦ ποιήσω, &c. i. e. taking away the members of Christ, shall I

ning that true believers who only are
Christ disrelate themselves to him, cease to
his body, whilst they live in a course of whore-
dery, and make themselves members of another
relation, viz. of those harlots, with whom they wil-
sin, and consequently in such a sense of the devil.'
First, For the sense of that place of the apostle,
15. as far as it relates to the merit of the cause in
shall have occasion to speak unto it at large here-
nd so shall not anticipate myself, or reader; for the
t I deny that there is the least mention made of any
change of members between Christ and the devil, much
of any such thing as frequent and ordinary; it is true
apostle says that he that is 'joined to an harlot makes
members the members of an harlot,' and on that consi-
ration and conclusion, with part of the dignity of believ-
whose persons are all the members of Christ, persuades
m from the sin of fornication; that they may so much as
into that sin, he doth not here intimate. That men not
ly in respect of themselves, and their principles of sin, and
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ns, but also eventually, notwithstanding any regard or re-
ect to other external prohibiting causes, may fall into all
sins from which they are dehorted, Mr. Goodwin hath
proved as yet, nor shall I live to see him do it.

Secondly, For a man to make himself the 'member of an
rlot,' is no more but to commit fornication: which whe-
r it be Mr. Goodwin's judgment or no, that none can fall
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body of Christ thereby, I know not; taking in the con-
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of regenerate persons sinning, with what shall be farther
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ourse of whoredom and adultery, and without such a course
y cease not, according to Mr. Goodwin's sense of these
rds, to be members of Christ, nor do they otherwise be-
me members of the devil. There is nothing here then that
imates such an interchange in the least.

Thirdly, For Mr. Goodwin's criticism upon the word
e: it is hardly worth taking notice of.

For first, If by taking, there be meant taking away, the sense must be, that they are first taken away from being members of Christ (the word expressing a time past in that tendency) and then made members of an harlot: which first, is not suited to the mind of Mr. Goodwin, who endeavours to prove their ceasing to be members of Christ, by becoming members of an harlot; the efficient cause of their ceasing to be joined to Christ, consisting in their being joined with an harlot. And secondly, destroys the whole of the apostle's reasoning in the place, from the great unworthiness of such a way or practice, as making the members of Christ, to be 'the members of an harlot,' because none should so be made, but those who had first ceased to be members of Christ; and so his assertion instead of an effectual persuasive, should upon the matter be entangled in a contradiction to itself.

And secondly, As there is nothing in the place to inforce that sense of the word, so there is nothing in the word to impose that sense upon the place. When our Saviour speaks to his disciples, Luke ix. 3. μηδὲν αἴρετε εἰς τὴν ὁδὸν, he doth not bid them take nothing away for their journey, but 'take nothing with them.' And so Mark vi. 8. where his command is, that μηδὲν αἴρωσιν εἰς ὁδὸν; and in that of Matt iv. 6. when the devil urged to our Saviour, ἐπὶ χειρῶν ἀροῦσί σε, he did not intimate that the angels should take him away in their hands, but support him from hurt: when Jesus, John xi. 41. ἦρε τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἄνω, he did not take away his eyes out of his head, and cast them upward, no more then the angel did his hand, when ἦρε τὴν χεῖρα εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν, Rev. x. 5. or the apostles their voice, when ἦραν φωνὴν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν, Acts iv. 24. Nor doth Christ command us to take away his yoke, in that heavenly word of his, Ἄρατε τὸν ζυγόν μου ἐφ' ὑμᾶς· Matt. xi. 29. so that here is little help left to this sense imposed on the place, under consideration, from the importance of the word, and so consequently not the least countenance given to that horrible interchange of members between Christ and the devil, which is asserted as a usual and frequent thing.

What he addeth in the close of the section, is no less considerable than the beginning of it; for, saith he, 'if it be no dishonour to Christ, to take in such as have been members of the devil, why should it be any disparagement to him

to reject such, who by their wicked and abominable ways render themselves unworthy of such a relation.'

Ans. Believers hold not their relation to Christ, upon any worthiness that is in themselves for it, but upon the account merely of grace, according to the tenour of the covenant of mercy. That they may fall into such wicked and abominable ways, as shall render them altogether unmeet for that relation, according to the law of it, is that great argument called *petitio principii*, which Mr. Goodwin hath used in this case a hundred times. But the comparison instituted in the first words is admirable; confessed it is, that it is no dishonour to Jesus Christ; yea, that it is his great honour, seeing 'he came to destroy the works of the devil, to bind the strong man, to spoil his goods, to destroy him that had the power of death, and to deliver them who by reason of death were in bondage all their days, to deliver his people from their sins, washing them in his blood, and to make them a peculiar people unto himself, zealous of good works.' That it is no dishonour, I say, for him to translate them from the power of Satan, into his own kingdom, making them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, by redeeming them from their vain conversation, to do according as he intended, and to take his own, given him of his Father, out of the hands of the tyrant which held them under bondage. Therefore, having undertaken to keep them and preserve them, having so overcome Satan in them, for them, by them, broken the head of the serpent, it is no dishonour for him, to lose ground given for his inheritance, with his subjects, members, brethren, children, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, into the hand of the devil again. What fort is so strong as to hold out against such a battery? If it be no honour for Christ to bind Satan and to spoil his goods, then it is no dishonour for him to be bound by Satan and to have his goods spoiled.

Another burden upon the shoulders of Mr. Goodwin's doctrine, whereof he labours to deliver it, is the great absurdity of the repetition of regeneration, whereof there is no mention at all in the Scripture, and which yet must be asserted by him, unless he will affirm all that fall away at any time irrecoverably to perish; which howsoever he waves at present, were with much more probability, according to

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renew them; therefore, says Mr. G. it is possible; what is of emphasis in the argument mentioned ariseth from two things. 1. That they are true believers; of which afterward. 2. That they fall totally away. This then is the importance of Mr. Goodwin's plea,' from this place; 'If true believers fall totally away, it is impossible they should be renewed to repentance; therefore, if true believers fall totally away, it is possible they should be renewed to and by repentance.' That there is a falling away, and a renewing again by repentance of the same persons, we grant. That falling away is partial only, which is incident unto true believers, who, when God heals their backslidings, are renewed by repentance. To be renewed also by repentance, is taken either for the renovation of our natures, and our change as unto state and condition, and so it is the same with regeneration and not to be repeated; or for a recovery by repentance in respect of personal failings, so it is the daily work of our lives. Jude says, some are 'twice dead;' that is, utterly so, an hyperbolical expression to aggravate their condition. Those to whom the gospel is a 'savour of death unto death,' may well be said to be 'twice dead;' unto the death that they are involved in, and are obnoxious to by nature; they add a second death, or rather, seal up their souls under the power and misery of the other, by contempt of the means of life and recovery; therefore, regeneration may be reiterated; 'Quod erat demonstrandum.'

Much of the section that remains, is taken up in declaring in many words, without the least attempt of proof, that it is agreeable to the honour of God, to renew men totally fallen away; that is, when those who have been quickened by him, washed in the blood of his Son, made partakers of the divine nature, embraced in the arms of his love, shall despise all this, disfaith themselves, reject the Lord and his love, trample on the blood of the covenant, kill their souls by depriving them of spiritual life, proclaim to all the world, their dislike of him, and his covenant of grace; yet though he hath not any where revealed, that he will permit any one so to do, or that he will accept of them again, upon their so doing; yet Mr. Goodwin, affirming that for him so to do, is agreeable to his holiness and righteousness, it is fit that those who conceive themselves bound to believe whatever he says, should think so too; for my part I am at liberty.

I should not farther pursue this discourse, nor insist on this digression, but that Mr. Goodwin hath taken advantage by the mention of regeneration, to deliver some rare notions of the nature of it, which deserve a little our farther taking notice of, for which end doubtless he published them. To make way then for his intendment, he informs us, sect. 29. 'That regeneration itself, according to the grammatical and proper signification of the word imports a reiteration, or repetition of some generation or other. It cannot import a repetition of the natural generation of men; the sense of Nicodemus in this point was orthodox, who judged such a thing impossible; therefore, it must import a repetition of a spiritual generation, unless we shall say (which I think is the road opinion) that it signifies only the spiritual generation, with a kind of reflection upon, and unto the birth natural.'

Ans. First, That the grammatical sense of the word imports 'a reiteration of some generation,' is only said; *ἄνα* hath other significations in composition, besides the intimating of a reiteration of the same thing; either in specie or individually, the same again; *παλινγένησία* would seem rather to inforce such an interpretation, than *ἀναγένησις*, which yet it doth not: it is spoken of that which hath no birth properly at all, as Philo de Mundo, *μὴ μόνον φθορὰν τοῦ κόσμου κατηγορεῖν ἀλλὰ καὶ παλινγενησίαν ἀναίρειν· ἄνα* of itself is only through,

Χῶρον *ἀν' ὑλήεντα*—Hom. Ὀδ. ξ. through a woody country; *ἀνάστασις*, resurrection, doth not import again, after another rising before, but a restoration from a lost state; so is *παλινγενησία* used, Matt. xix. 28. To be regenerate, is to have a new, and another generation, not any one repeated. In the place mentioned of John by Mr. Goodwin, there is mention neither of a 'repetition of a former generation,' nor directly of a new one; though it be so, it is not there called so. Our Saviour at first says, *ἐανμή τις γενηθῆ ἄνωθεν*, 'unless a man be born from above,' as the word is elsewhere rendered, and properly signifies, as John iii. 31. John xix. 11. Mark xv. 38. James iii. 17. and sometimes of old or former days, as Acts xxvi. 5. once only, it signifies 'again,' Gal. iv. 9. but there joined with *πάλιν*, which restrains it. And in the exposition afterward of what he intended by that expression, he calls it simply a being 'born of the water and

the spirit,' ver. 5. without the least intimation of the repetition of any birth, but only the asserting of a new spiritual one; called a birth, indeed, with allusion to the birth natural, which is the road opinion, well beaten ever since Christ first trod that path. Besides, the very same thing which is expressed under the name of regeneration, being a spiritual birth, which a man had not before, is also delivered unto us in such words and terms, as manifest no reiteration of any state, condition, or thing to be included therein, as conversion to God, a quickening from death, sanctification by the spirit, &c. all which manifest the induction of a new life and form, and not the repetition of another. Hence the ancients called baptism, regeneration; being the initial ordinance of Christianity, and expressive of the new life, which in, and through Christ, we receive; and that from Tit. iii. 5. Regeneration, then, neither in the import of the word, nor in the nature of the thing, doth require a reiteration of any generation, but only the addition of a new one, to that which a man hath before; and whereunto this doth allude. The receiving of a new spiritual birth and life, is our regeneration, renovation, resurrection, quickening, implanting into Christ, and the like: so that the foundation of all the ensuing discourse, is a mere quagmire, where no firm footing can be obtained; and of the same nature is that which ensues. 'It is,' saith he, 'the common sense of divines, that the two generations mentioned, the natural and spiritual, are *membra dividentia*, and contra-distinguished the one unto the other; and so the apostle Peter too seems to state and represent them, as also our Saviour himself;' John iii. 6. Now there can hardly any instance be given, where the introducing of one contrary form or quality into the subject, is termed a reiteration, or repetition of the other; calefaction (for example) is never termed a repetition of frigefaction, nor calefaction called a reiteration of frigefaction; nor when a regenerate or mortified man dieth his natural death, is he said to reiterate or repeat his spiritual death.

Ans. That in the term 'regeneration' two births are implied, may be granted; that the same is intimated to be repeated, is denied, and not proved at all; and, therefore, Mr. Goodwin says well, that the introducing of a contrary form, is not called the reiteration of another, no more is it

here; our new birth is called our regeneration, or new generation, in allusion to our natural birth, not as a repetition of it; neither is the allusion in respect of the contrary qualities, wherewith the one and the other are attended; but in respect of the things themselves, in which regard, as they are not the same, so they are not contrary, but diverse. They are both births, the one natural, the other spiritual; natural and spiritual in that sense, are not contrary qualities, but diverse adjuncts; and so are the two births compared, 1 Pet. i. 23. John i. 13. In which last place our regeneration is expressed under the simple term of being born, with distinction to the natural birth, and not the least intimation of the iteration of any birth or generation subjoined; so also is it, James i. 18. so that hitherto little progress is made by Mr. Goodwin towards his intendment whatever it be. Thus then he expresseth it:

'I rather,' saith he, 'conceive that regeneration, which the Scripture makes appropriable only unto persons living to years of discretion, who generally in the days of their youth, degenerate from the innocency of their childhood and younger years, and corrupt themselves with the principles and ways of the world; relates not to the natural generation as such, I mean, as natural, but unto the spiritual estate and condition of men in respect of their natural generation and birth, in and upon which they are if not simply and absolutely yet comparatively, innocent, harmless, free from pride and malice; and in respect of these qualifications, in grace and favour with God, upon the account of the death and sufferings of Christ for them, as we shall afterward prove.'

Here you have the sum of the design, and the doctrine of regeneration cleared from all those vain and erroneous opinions, wherewith it hath so long been clouded. It is the returning of men into the good state and condition wherein they are born, after they have degenerated into ways of wickedness; we thought it had been the quickening of them, who are by nature dead in trespasses and sins, their being begotten again by the will of God, the bestowing of a new principle of Spirit and life upon them, a translation from death to life, the opening of blind eyes, making them who were darkness, to be light in the Lord. It seems we have all this while been in the dark, and that regeneration indeed, is only a returning to that condition from whence we thought

been a delivery; but let us a little see the demonstration of this new notion of regeneration.

First, he saith, 'The Scripture makes it appropriable only to them who come to years of discretion.' Sir, your proof; we cannot take your bare word in a thing of this importance. In the place yourself chose to mention, as the foundation you laid of the inferences you are now making, our Saviour says, it is a being 'born of the Spirit;' doth the Scripture make this appropriable only unto men of discretion? Men only of discretion, then, can enter into the kingdom of God; for none, 'not so born of the Spirit shall enter therein;' John iii. 5. If none but men of discretion can be born of the Spirit, then infants have no other birth but only that of the flesh; and 'that which is born of the flesh is flesh;' ver. 6. not capable of entering into the kingdom of heaven. Surely you better deserve the title of 'durus pater infantum,' than he to whom of old it was given; perhaps a grosser figment was never framed by a man of discretion.

Secondly, It is true, infants are comparatively innocent, in respect of actual transgressions; but equally innocent and guilty with sinners of discretion, in respect of natural state and condition. They are no less obnoxious to that death, from whence our regeneration is a delivery, by the bestowing of a new spiritual life, than a sinner of a hundred years old: a returning to this condition, it seems, is a regeneration. 'Quantum est in rebus inane!'

Thirdly, The qualifications of infants, not regenerated, are merely negative, and that in respect of the acts of sin, not the habitual seed and root of them; for in them dwells no good; that in respect of these qualifications of innocency that are in them by nature antecedent to any regeneration (all which are resolved into a natural impotency of perpetrating sin), they are accepted in grace and favour with God, had been another new notion, had not Pelagius and Socinus before you fallen upon it: 'without faith it is impossible to please God;' Heb. xi. 6. and his wrath 'abides on them that believe not;' John iii. 36. That infants have or may have faith, and not be regenerated, will scarcely be granted by them who believe the Spirit of Christ to cause regeneration where he is bestowed; Tit. iii. 5. and all faith to be the fruit of that Spirit; Gal. v. 26, 27. Farther, for the qualification of

infants by nature; how are they brought clean, from that which is unclean? Are they not conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity? Or was that David's hard case alone? If they are born of the flesh, and are flesh; if they are unclean, how come they to be in that estate, upon the account of their qualifications accepted in the love and favour of him, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity? If this be the doctrine of regeneration that Mr. G. preaches, I desire the Lord to bless them that belong unto him, in a deliverance from attending thereunto. Of the effects of the death of Christ, in respect of all children I shall not now treat; that they should be saved by Christ, not washed in his blood, not sanctified by his Spirit (which to be is to be regenerate), is another new notion of the new gospel.

The countenance which Mr. Goodwin would beg to his doctrine, from that of our Saviour to his disciples, 'except ye be turned and become as little children ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God;' reproving their ambition and worldly thoughts, from which they were to be weaned, that they might be fit for that gospel state and employment whereunto he called them, and wherein they were to serve him, does no more advantage him nor the cause he hath undertaken, than that other caution of our Saviour to the same persons, to be 'wise as serpents and innocent as doves,' would do him that should undertake to prove that Christians ought to become pigeons or snakes. Thus much then we have learned of the mind of Mr. G. by his digression; 1. That no children are regenerate; 2. That they are all accepted with God through Christ, upon the account of the good qualifications that are in them; 3. That regeneration is a man's returning to the state wherein he is born; and having taken out this lesson, which we shall never learn by heart whilst we live, we may now proceed.

I shall only add to the main of the business in hand, that so long as a man is a child of God, he cannot, he need not, to repeat his regeneration. But that one who hath been the child of God, should cease to be the child of God, is somewhat strange. How can that be done amongst men? that he should cease to be such a man's son, who was his

' Those things that stand in relation, upon any thing ast, and therefore irrevocable, cannot have their

beings continued, and their relation dissolved; it is impossible but that cause and effect must be related one to another; such is the relation between father and son; the foundation of it is an act past and irrevocable, and therefore the relation itself is indissoluble. Is it not so with God and his children? when they once stand in that relation, it cannot be dissolved. But of these things hitherto.

To proceed with that place of Scripture which I laid as the foundation of this discourse. The general way of lust's dealing with the soul, the bringing forth of sin, whereof there are two acts expressed, ver. 14. the one of drawing away, the other enticing, is to be insisted on. Upon the first, the person tempted is ἐξελκόμενος, drawn off, or drawn away; and upon the second, he is δελεαζόμενος, enticed, or entangled.

The first stirring of sin is to draw away the soul from what it ought to be fixed upon, by its rising up irregularly to some delightful object. For a man to be drawn away by his lust, is to have his lust drawn out to some object suited to it, wherein it delighteth. Now this drawing away, denoteth two things.

1. The turning of the soul from the actual rectitude of its frame towards God. Though the soul cannot always be in actual exercise of grace towards God, yet it ought always to be in an immediate readiness to any spiritual duty, upon the account whereof, when occasion is administered, it doth as naturally go forth to God, as a vessel full of water floweth forth when vent is given unto it. Hence we are commanded to pray always. Our Saviour giveth a parable to instruct his disciples, that they ought to pray πάντοτε; Luke xviii. 1. And we are commanded to pray ἀδιαλείπτως, 'without ceasing or intermission,' 1 Thess. v. 17. which the same apostle in another place calleth praying ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ 'in every place;' namely, as occasion is administered. It is not the perpetual exercise of this duty (as the Jews some of them have ridiculously interpreted the first psalm of 'reading the law day and night'), which would shut out and cut off all other duties, not only of men's callings and employments as to this life, but all other duties of the ways and worship of God whatever; but it is only the readiness and promptitude of the heart in its constant frame to that necessary duty, that is

required; now he who is ἐξελκόμενος by lust, is drawn off from this frame; that is, he is interrupted in it by his lust, diverting unto some sinful object. And as to this particular, there is a great difference betwixt the sinning of believers, and those who arise not beyond that height which the power of conviction beareth them oftentimes up unto. For,

1. The main of a true believer's watching in his whole life, and in the course of his walking with God, is directed against this off-drawing from that habitual frame of his heart by lust and sin. His great business is, as the apostle telleth us, to 'take the whole armour of God to him,' that sin if it be possible, may make no approach to his soul; Eph. vi. 13. It is to keep up their spirits to a 'hate of every evil way and to delight in God continually;' and because they cannot attain in this life unto perfection, they cry out of the power of sin leading them captives to the law thereof. They would have their wills dead to sin, wholly dead, and have trouble that they are not so, as to the general frame of their spirits how oft soever they be drawn off. For other persons they have truly no such frame at all, whatever they may be cut into the likeness of, by the sharpness of Scriptural convictions that come upon them; and therefore they watch not, as to the keeping of it. The deeper you dive into them, the more near you come to their hearts, the worse they are; their very inward parts is wickedness. I speak now of the ordinary frame of the one and other.

This drawing off by sin in believers, is by the power of sin, in opposition to their will. Their wills lie against it to the utmost: they would not, as was shewed, be so drawn off. But as for the others, as hath been shewn, however their minds may be enlightened, and their consciences awakened, and their affections corrected and restrained, their wills are wholly dead in sin.

Secondly, When a man is ἐξελκόμενος or drawn away, there are stricken out between the lust and the pleasing object, some glances of the heart, with thoughts of sin. When lust hath gone thus far, if a violent temptation fall in, the person in whom it doth so befall, may be carried, or rather hurried [illegible] surprised into no small advance towards the perpe- [illegible]n, without the least delight in the sin or consent [illegible]nto it, if he be a godly man. So was it in the

case of David, in the cutting of the lap of the garment of Saul. Lust stirred in him, drew him off from his frame of dependance on God, and by the advantage of Saul's presence stirred up thoughts of self-security, and advantage in him, which carried him almost to the very act of sin, before he recovered himself. Then, I say, is a man drawn away, not only in respect to the term from whence, but also of that whereunto, when the thoughts of the object presented as suitable to lust are cast in, though immediately rejected. This I intend by this acting of sin; which, although it be our sin, as having its rise and spring in us, and is continually to be lamented, yet when it is not accompanied with any delight of the heart or consent of the will, but the thought of it, is like a piece of fiery iron cast into water which maketh a sudden commotion or noise, but yet is suddenly quenched. It is that which regenerate men are and may be subject to; which also keepeth them humble all their days. There is more in this drawing away, than a single thought or apprehension of evil amounts to (which may be without the least sin. 'To know evil is not evil') but yet is short of the soul's consent unto it.

The second way wherein lust proceedeth in tempting is by enticing the soul, and he who is so dealt withal by it is said to be δελεαζόμενος, 'to be enticed.' There is something more in this, than in being only drawn away. The word here used is twice mentioned in the Second Epistle of Peter, chap. ii. Once it is rendered to 'beguile,' Δελεάζοντες ψυχὰς ἀστηρίκτους, ver. 14. and in the other 'alluring,' ver. 18. It cometh (as is commonly known) from Δελέας, a 'bait,' which is from Δόλεαρ or Δόλος, 'deceit,' because the end of a bait is to deceive, and to catch by deceiving. Thence δελεάζω is to entice, to allure, to entangle, as men do fishes and birds with baits. That which by this expression the Holy Ghost intendeth, is the prevalency of lust in drawing the soul unto that, which is by the Casuits termed *delectatio morosa*, 'a secret delight' in the evil, abiding some space upon it. So that it would do that which it is tempted and enticed unto, were it not forbidden; as the fish liketh the bait well enough, but is afraid of the hook. The soul for a season is captived to like the sin, and so is under the power of it, but is afraid of the guilt. It sticketh only at

this, 'how shall it do this great thing and sin against the Lord.' Now though the mind never frame any intention of fulfilling the evil, wherewith the soul is thus entangled, or of committing that sin whereunto it is allured and enticed, yet the affections having been cast into the mould of sin for a season, and conformed unto it by delight (which is the conformity of the affections to the thing delighted in), this is a high degree of sin; and that because it is directly contrary to that 'death unto sin,' and the 'crucifying of the flesh and the lusts thereof,' which we are continually called unto. It is in a sense, a making 'provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof:' provision is made though the flesh be not suffered to feed thereon, but only delight itself with beholding of it.

I shall not deny but this also may befall a true believer, it being chiefly implied in Rom. vii. but yet with wide difference, from the condition of other persons, in their being under the power of the deceits and beguilements of sin. For first, This neither doth nor can grow to be the habitual frame of their hearts; because, as the apostle telleth us, 'they are dead to sin and cannot live any longer therein;' Rom. vi. 2. and, 'their old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed;' ver. 6. Now though a man should abstain from all actual sins or open committing of sin all his days, yet if he have any habitual delight in sin, and defileth his soul with delightful contemplations of sin, he liveth to sin and not to God, which a believer cannot do, for he is 'not under the law but under grace.' To abide in this state, is to 'wear the garment spotted with the flesh.' But now take another person, however heightened and wrought up by convictions, unless it be when conscience is stirred up, and some affrightment is put upon him, he can as his leisure affords, give his heart the swing in inordinate affections, or what else pleaseth and suiteth his state, condition, temper, and the like.

2. A believer is exceedingly troubled upon the account of his being at any time led captive to the power of sin in any kind; and the review of the frame of his spirit, wherein his affections were by delight conformed to any sin, is a matter of trouble and deep humiliation to him. I am bold, 'De Nup. Concupis.' cap. 8. that it is this

perpetrating of sin, and not the actual committing of it, which the apostle complaineth of; Rom. vii. Two things persuade me hereunto. First, That it is the ordinary course and walking of a regenerate man, that Paul describeth in that place; and not his extraordinary falls and failings, under great and extraordinary temptations. This is evident from the whole manner of his discourse, and scope of the place. Now ordinarily, through the grace of God, the saints do not do outwardly and practically the things they would not; that is, commit sin actually, as to the outward act; but they are ordinarily only swayed to this entanglement by the baits of sin. Secondly, It is the sole work of indwelling sin, that the apostle there describeth, as it is in itself, and not as it is advantaged by other temptations, in which it carrieth not believers out to actual sins, as to such accomplishment of them, which is their state in respect of great temptations only. It is then, I say, the great burden of their souls, that they have been in their affections at any time dealing with the baits of sin, which causeth them to cry out for help, and filleth them with a perpetual self-abhorrency and condemnation.

3. In such surprisals of sin, although the affections may be ensnared, and the judgment and conscience by their tumultuating, dethroned for a season, yet the will still maketh head against sin in believers, and crieth out, that whether it will or no, it is captived and violently overborne, calling for relief, like a man surprised by an enemy. There is an active renitency in the will against sin, whose bait is exposed to the soul, and wherewith it is enticed, allured, or entangled; when, of all the faculties of the soul, if any thing be done in any act of sin in unregenerate men, the will is the ringleader. Conscience may grumble, and judgment may plead, but the will runneth headlong to it. And thus far have I (by way of digression) proceeded in the difference there is, betwixt regenerate and unregenerate men, as to the root and foundation of sin, as also to their ordinary walking. What is farther added by the apostle in the two following degrees, in the place mentioned, because thence also may some light be obtained to the business in hand, shall be briefly insisted on.

The next thing in the progress of sin, is lust's 'conceiving.'

When it hath turned off the heart from its communion with God, or consideration of its duty, and entangled or hampered the affections in delight with the sinful object proposed, prevailing with the soul to dwell with some complacency upon the thoughts of sin, it then falleth to 'conceiving;' that is, it warms, foments, cherisheth thoughts and delights of the sin entertained, until it so far prevail upon the will (in them in whose wills there is an opposition unto it), that being wearied out with the solicitations of the flesh, it giveth over its power, as to its actual predominant exercise, and sensibly dissenteth not, from the sin whereunto it is tempted. That this may sometimes befall a regenerate person, I have granted before, and what is the difference herein betwixt them, and unregenerate persons, may be collected from what hath been already delivered.

Of the next step of sin, which is, its bringing forth, or the actual accomplishment of the sin so conceived as above expressed, there is the same reason. Τίκτει, 'it bringeth out' of its womb, the child of sin, which it had conceived; it is the actual perpetration of sin formerly consented unto, that is expressed under this metaphor. I have little to add upon this head, to what was formerly spoken. For,

1. As they are not the sins of daily infirmities that are here intended, in the place of the apostle under consideration, but such as lie in an immediate tendency unto death, as to their eminent guilt; as also being the fruit of the heart's conception of sin, by fomenting and warming thoughts of sin, with delight, until consent unto it be prevalent in the soul, so falls of this nature in the saints, are extraordinary, and always attended with their loss of peace, the weakening of their faith, wounding of their souls, and obnoxiousness, without repentance unto death. God, indeed, hath provided better things for them, but for themselves, they have done their endeavour, to destroy their own souls.

2. That God never suffereth his saints to fall thus, but it is for the accomplishment of some very glorious end of his, in their afflictions, trials, patience, humiliation, which he will bring about. These ends of God are many and va-

I shall not enter into a particular discourse concern-

ing

3. That an impenitent continuance in and under the guilt of such a sin, is a sore sign of a heart, that neither hath, nor ever had any true faith. In others, there is a truth of that of Austin, who affirmed, that he dared say that it might be good for some, to have fallen into some eminent particular sin, for their humiliation and caution all their days.

4. That this frequent conception of sin, and bringing of it forth, in persons who have been heightened by conviction to a great regularity of walking and conversation, is the means whereby they do go forth unto that which is mentioned in the last place, which is finishing of sin; that is, so to be brought under the power of it, as to complete the whole work of sin. Now men bring it forth by the the temptations, and upon the surprisals forementioned; but they that come to finish it, or do the work of it, in them it will bring forth death. This I take to be the intendment of that expression, Ἁμαρτία ἀποτελεσθεῖσα, 'sin perfected.' The word ἀποτελεῖν, is no where used in the New Testament; τελεῖν, and ἐπιτελεῖν, are; there is τὴν νόμον τελεῖν, which is, not to do any one act which the law requireth, but to walk studiously and constantly, according to the rule thereof; and so ἐπιτελεῖν, as the apostle useth it, Philip. i. 6. where we translate it, as here, ἀποτελεῖν. To 'perfect the good work,' is to walk in the way of grace and the gospel, unto the end. So to 'perfect sin,' is to fulfil the work of sin, and to walk in the way of sin, to be under the dominion and reign of sin so far, as to be carried out in a course of sinning; and this is that alone, which we exempt believers from; which, that they are exempted from, unto all that hath formerly been spoken, I shall add the consideration of one place of Scripture, being turned aside from my thoughts of handling this at large, as the second part of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, the former being grown under my hands, beyond expectation.

Now this place is, the 1 John iii. 9. 'Whatsoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God.' A place of Scripture, that always hath amazed the adversaries of the doctrine, which hitherto, through the grace of God, we have asserted; being in itself, fully sufficient to captivate every

understanding unto the obedience of its truth, that is not resolved to cleave to a contrary conclusion, let what demonstration soever lie against it. In the defence of the doctrine under consideration, should we use expressions of the same importance with these here used by the apostle, as we should abundantly satisfy ourselves, that we had delivered our minds and sense to the understanding of any indifferent person, with whom we might have to do; so we should by no means avoid all those imputations of folly and error, that our doctrine suffereth under, from the men that have entertained an enmity against it, as it is held forth in equivalent expressions by us. The authority of the Holy Ghost hath gained thus much upon our adversaries, that when he asserteth in express, and expressive terms, the very thing or things that in us are called folly, that evasions should be studied, and pains taken to rack his words, to a sense which they will not bear, rather than plainly to deny his authority. But let the words, with the scope and tendency be considered. 1. The scope and intendment of the apostle in the place is to give a discriminating character of the children of God, and the children of the devil; thus he fully expresseth himself unto us, ver. 10. 'In this,' saith he, 'the children of God are manifested, and the children of the devil; whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.' And withal to press on an exhortation against sin, whereunto he useth the argument that lieth in the following words: 'If any one sin that thinketh himself to be born of God, he deceiveth himself;' ver. 7. 'Little children let no man deceive you; he that doth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil.' But how proveth he this? In these words, 'Whosoever is born of God sinneth not;' doth not, cannot sin. Such is the genius and nature of the children of God, of them that are born of him, that they do not, they cannot sin. You are persuaded that you are so born of God; therefore, you must press after such a frame, such an *ingenie* and disposition, such a principle, as that thereby you cannot sin; it must manifest itself to be in you, if you be the children of God.

Now whereas it is offered by Mr. Goodwin, cap. 10. sect. 27. p. 194. 'That the context, or scope of the whole

place, doth not invite such an exposition as is usually insisted on, because (saith he) the intent and drift of the apostle from ver. 3. even to the end of the chapter (as he that doth but run the context over may read), is not to shew or argue, whether the sons of God may possibly in time so degenerate, as to live sinfully and die impenitently; but to evince this, that those who claim the great honour and privilege of being the children of God, cannot justify or make good this claim neither unto others, nor unto themselves, but by a holy and Christian life and conversation. Now it is one thing to argue and prove, who are the sons of God at present; another, whether they who are such at present must of necessity always so continue. The former is the apostle's theme in the context, the latter he is wholly silent of.'

I say, it is evident that the scope of the place is to evince, that in the children of God, those that are born of him, there is such a principle, genius, a new nature, as that upon the account thereof, they cannot sin; and therefore, that those who have not such principles in them, whatever their pretences be, are not indeed born of God; and in this he manifesteth, that those who are indeed born of God, cannot possibly so degenerate, as to fall into total impenitency, so as to become children of the devil, which he emphatically affirmeth.

2. He doth indeed declare, that none can make good their title to be children of God, but those who can justify their claim, by a holy and Christian conversation; but yet moreover, he maketh good the assertion by this farther discovery which he maketh of their new nature, to be such, as that they cannot sin, or degenerate into a condition of lying under the power of a vain conversation: so that though his intent should not be primarily, to manifest that those who are at present the children of God, cannot apostatize, but must so continue, yet it is to confirm their nature and genius, to be such, with the principles which from God they have received, that so it shall be with them, so they shall abide; and to this he is not silent, but eminently expressive.

The context being thus clear, the words themselves are a proposition or thesis, and a reason for the confirmation of the truth of that proposition. The proposition is ready at hand in the words; 'He that is born of God, doth not, can-

not commit sin.' The reason of the proposition confirming the truth thereof, is twofold; 1. Because he is born of God; 2. Because his seed whereof he is so born, remaineth.

The proposition is universal, Πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, 'every one that is born of God;' whence these two things ensue. 1. The truth of it hath a necessary cause or causes; universal propositions must have so, or they are not true. If that which is their ground may be otherwise, it invalidates their certainty; such then must be the cause of this assertion of the apostle.

2. That it compriseth all and every one that is interested in that which is the cause of the certainty of this universal assertion or proposition; every one who is 'born of God,' that hath this seed, be he young or old, weak or strong, wise or foolish, exercised in the ways of God, or newly entered into them, all is one; whosoever is thus interested in the foundation, is equally interested in the inference.

In the proposition itself may be considered the subject, and what is affirmed of it. The subject is, 'every one that is born of God.' That which is affirmed of it is, 'sinneth not, cannot sin.'

1. For the first, viz. the subject. They are those which are 'born of God,' and who they are that are so born of God, the Scripture is clear in; neither is there any difference of importance, as to the intendment of this expression. Those who suppose that believers of some eminency only are denoted in it, do not consider that all believers whatever are sharers in the grace intended therein; they are all said to be 'born again, not of the will of flesh but of God;' John. i. 13. For it is ascribed to all believers on the name of Christ, ver. 12. 'He begetteth them all of his own will;' Jam. i. 18. as also, 1 Pet. i. 23. he is said to 'beget them,' as to 'quicken them;' Eph. ii. 1. and they to be born of him, as they are quickened or raised from the dead. Two things are intimated in this expression.

1. A new principle, habit, or spiritual life, which such persons have; hence they are said to be 'born;' as they who are born in the world are partakers of a vital principle that is the foundation of all their actions; so have they here a new life, a new vital principle; by their being born are they made partakers of it.

2. The divine original of that principle or life, is from God. They have the principle of life, immediately from him, and therefore are said to be born of God, and both these considerations are here used as descriptions of the subject: and in the close of the reason of the proposition, they are insisted on, as the cause of that effect of not sinning; 'he sinneth not because he is born of God;' both the nature of the principle itself which in itself is abiding, and the rise or original that it hath from God, have an influence into that casuality that is ascribed to it; but about this there can be no great contest.

Secondly, That which is affirmed of every such person is, that he 'committeth not sin.' That this expression is to be attended with its restrictions and limitations is evident, from that contrariety wherein, in its whole latitude, it standeth to sundry other testimonies in the book of God; yea, in this very epistle. 'There is none that doth good and sinneth not,' saith Solomon, 1 Kings viii. and 'In many things we sin all,' saith James, in James iii. 4. And this apostle putteth all out of question, by convincing the best of saints, that have 'communion with the Father and Son,' that by saying we have no sin, by a denial of it, we involve ourselves in the guilt of it. 'If we (we apostles, we who have fellowship with the Father and the Son) say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves;' 1 John. i. 8. 'Doth not commit sin,' then, cannot be taken absolutely for doth not sin at all. There is a synecdoche in the words; and they must be restrained to some kind of sin, or to some manner or degree in, or of sinning. Some say 'he doth not, cannot sin,' is, they do not commit sin with delight, not deliberately and with their full and whole will, without reluctancy and opposition in their wills unto sin (which reluctancy is at a vast distance from the reluctancy that is raised in wicked men from the convictions of their conscience and judgment), which sense is canvassed by Mr. Goodwin to no advantage at all, sect. 25. For in the way and manner formerly explained, this may well take place. 'Committeth not sin' then, is, doth not so commit sin as that sin should reign in him spoken of, and prevail with him to death. There is an emphasis and intention in the words, 'committeth not sin;' that is, doth not so commit it, as to be given up to the power of it; he doth not

commit sin in such a way as to be separated from communion with God thereby; which is only done when sin taketh the rule or reign in any person.

This exposition, Mr. Goodwin saith, 'if it can be made to stand upright, will bear the weight of the whole cause depending alone, but as it is, it argueth weakness to determine for our own sense, in a controversy or question, without giving a very substantial reason for the exposition.' I doubt if Mr. Goodwin's discourses in this treatise were to be tried by this rule, a man might upon very substantial grounds and reasons, call many of his assertions into controversy; and because he addeth, 'that such is his hard hap he can meet with no reasons at all,' I must needs question whether he made any diligent search or no; to this purpose shall supply him with one or two, that lie hard at hand.

This then to be the intendment of the words is evident:

1. From the scope of the place and aim of the apostle therein: this is to distinguish, as was said, betwixt the children of God and of the devil. The children of the devil commit sin, ver. 8. 'He that committeth sin is of the devil,' as he giveth an instance of one that did so sin, ver. 12. 'Cain,' saith he, 'was of the devil, he was of that wicked one and he committeth sin.' How did Cain commit sin? Impenitently, to death, that is the committing of sin which is ascribed to them that are of the devil, of the wicked one; now, saith he, 'whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;' that is, he doth not so commit sin as the children of the devil, that wicked one do; he sins not to death with impenitency.

2. The same apostle doth most eminently clear his own intendment in this expression, chap. v. 17, 18. of this epistle, 'All unrighteousness is sin; there is a sin not unto death, we know that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.' That expression, ver. 18. 'sinneth not,' standeth in opposition to the sin mentioned, ver. 17. sin unto death: 'there is a sin unto death;' but he that is born of God sinneth not unto death. So that both the context and the exposition of the words given in a parallel place, affordeth us the sense insisted on.

Three reasons are attended by Mr. Goodwin against this exposition, 'and many more (saith he) are at hand,' which it

seems he is willing to spare for another season. Of those that he is pleased to use, I have already considered that which is of the chiefest importance, being taken from the scope of the place. It hath been already declared, not only that the sense by him urged is not suitable to the intendment of the Holy Ghost, and that Mr. G. is not a little mistaken in his analysis of the chapter, but that the exposition insisted on by us, is from thence enforced.

His other reasons are, first, 'That the grammar or letter of the phrase breatheth not the least air of such a sense.'

Ans. That the expression is synecdochical was before affirmed, what it importeth under the power of that figure, is the grammatical sense of the words. To the grammatical regularity and signification of them, doth their figurativeness belong. Let the words be restrained as the figure requireth, and the sense is most proper, as was signified.

But secondly, saith he, 'The phrase of committing sin, is nowhere in the Scripture found in such a sense, as to sin with final impenitency, or to sin to death.'

Ans. The contrary hath been demonstrated. The same phrase necessarily importeth no less, ver. 8. of this chapter, and an equivalent expression beyond all contradiction intending the same, chap. v. 17, 18. Besides, a phrase may be so circumstantiated, as to be in one only place, restrained to a sense, which it doth not elsewhere necessarily import. So that notwithstanding these exceptions, the exposition of the words is clear as before given in. And yet this is all Mr. G. produceth as his ground and foundation, whereon to stand in denying this proposition, 'he that is born of God sinneth not;' that is, falleth not under the power of reigning sin, sinneth not to death as the children of the wicked one, which I shall leave under that consideration wherewith it is educed from the scope of the text, and the parallel place of chap. v. 16, 17. The truth is, there is not much need to contend about this expression, Mr. G. granting that the intendment of it is, 'that such as are born of God do not walk ordinarily and customarily in any ways of known sin,' sect. 28. 'Which,' as he saith, 'is the import of that phrase ποιεῖν ἁμαρτιάν' (the contrary whereof might yet be easily evinced), he maketh no trade or occupation of sinning; that

is, he doth not sin in an inconsistency of communion with God, in the covenant of his grace. Now in this sense he granteth his proposition, 'he that is born of God sinneth not,' i. e. ordinarily or customarily; that is, so as not be accepted of God; that is, no believer sinneth at such a rate as not to be accepted with God. Add now hereunto the ground and reason of this assertion, viz. His being born of God, and the abiding of the seed in him, and we have obtained all that we desire to evince from this place. Because such a one is born of God (which is a reason which holdeth good to eternity being an act irrevocably past), and because the seed abideth in him, he cannot sin ordinarily or customarily: which kind of sinning alone (as is supposed) can eject the abiding seed; that is, he sinneth not beyond the rate of sins of infirmity, nor in any such way as should render him incapable of communion or acceptance with God.

The apostle nextly advanceth farther with his design and saith, 'He that is born of God cannot sin:' that is, that sin which he sinneth not, he cannot sin; he cannot fall under the power of reigning sin unto death. I confess the words can and cannot, are variously used in the Scriptures; some kind of impossibility in one respect or other (for things may be in some regard impossible, that are not so absolutely) it alway denoteth. The whole of the variety in this kind, may be referred to two heads.

1. That which is morally impossible. Of that it is said, that it cannot be done; 2 Cor. xiii. 8. saith Paul, 'we can do nothing against the truth:' and Acts iv. 20. say the apostles, 'we cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard.' It was morally impossible that ever any thing should have been done by Paul against the truth; or that the apostles, having received the Spirit, should not speak what they had seen and heard of Christ. And of many things that are thus morally impossible, there are most certain and determinate causes, as to make the thing so impossible, as in respect of the event, to be absolutely impossible. It is morally impossible that the devil should do that which is spiritually good, and yet absolutely impossible. There is more in many a thing that is morally impossible than a mere opposition to justice; as we say, 'Illud possumus quod jure

possumus.' The causes of moral impossibility may be such, as to tie up the thing which it relateth unto, in an everlasting nonfuturition. There is also,

2. An impossibility that is physical, from the nature of the things themselves. So Jer. xiii. 23. 'Can the Ethiopian change his skin?' that is, he cannot. Matt. vii. 18. 'A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can an evil tree bring forth good fruit.' That is, nothing can act contrary to its own natural principles: and as we shall see afterward, there is of this impossibility in the 'cannot' here mentioned. They cannot do it, upon the account of the new spiritual nature wherewith they are endued.

Now there may be a third kind of impossibility in spiritual things, arising from both these, which one hath not ineptly called the ethico-physical, or morally-natural, partaking of the nature of both the other. It is moral because it relateth to duty, what is to be done or not to be done: and it is physical because it relateth to a cause or principle that can, or cannot produce the effect. So our Saviour telleth the Pharisees; 'How can ye being evil, speak good things?' Or ye cannot; Matt. xii. 34. 'You cannot hear my words;' John viii. 43. It was morally impossible theyshould either speak or hear, that is, either believe or do that which is spiritually good, having no principles that should enable them thereunto, having no root that should bear up unto fruit, being evil trees in themselves, and having a principle, a root continually, universally, uninterruptedly, inclining and disposing them another way, to acts of a quite contrary nature. Of this kind is that impossibility here intimated. The effect denied is morally impossible, upon the account of the internal physical cause hindering of it.

However then the word in the Scripture may be variously taken, yet here it is from adjacent circumstances evidently restrained to such a signification as in respect of the event, absolutely rejecteth the thing denied. The gradation of the apostle also leadeth us to it. 'He sinneth not,' nay, 'he cannot sin.' 'He cannot sin,' riseth in the assertion of that before expressed, 'he sinneth not:' which absolutely rejecteth the gloss that some seek to put upon the words, namely, that cannot sin is no more but cannot sin easily; and cannot sin but as it were with difficulty; such is the antipathy and ha-

bitual opposition which they have to sin;' which Mr. Goodwin adhereth unto: for besides,

That this is in itself false, there being no such antipathy in any to sin, but that they may easily fall into it, yea and with great difficulty and labour do restrain from it, as the apostle argueth at large, Rom. vii. so is it also flatly contradictory to the words themselves. The apostle saith, 'he that is born of God sinneth not, cannot sin;' he can sin, saith this gloss, though difficultly; now he that can sin difficultly, can sin: can sin, and cannot sin, are flatly contradictory; he cannot then sin at all, the sin that is intended in the place of whom it is said, 'he cannot sin.'

Thus we have cleared the first proposition in the words, both as to the subject, 'every one that is born of God,' and the predicate, 'sinneth not, cannot sin;' which last expression, taken in its only proper and most usual signification, denoteth an impossibility of the event, and plainly confirmeth in direct terms the position we insist on from the words.

Mr. Goodwin knoweth not well (if I am able to gather any thing of his thoughts, from his expressions to the argument in hand) what to say to this assertion of the apostles. The argument he intendeth to deal withal from the place he casteth into this form; he that sinneth not, neither can sin, cannot fall away. 'Whosoever is born of God sinneth not, neither can sin.' Ergo.

Coming to the consideration of that expression 'cannot sin,' he findeth out, as he supposeth, four several acceptations in the Scripture, of the word 'cannot' and giveth us an account of his thoughts upon the consideration of them; that in respect of these senses both propositions are false. Now one of the propositions being the express language and literal expression of the Holy Ghost, not varied in the least, there is no way to relieve himself, from being thought and conceived to give the lie to the blessed Spirit of God, by flatly denying what he peremptorily affirmeth, but only by denying the word 'cannot' to be taken in this place, in any of the senses before-mentioned. Doth he then fix on this course for his own extrication? Doth he give in another sense of the word, which he accepts and grants that in that sense the affirmation of the Holy Ghost may be true? Not in the least. Yea plainly for one of the senses he supposeth

himself to have found out of the word 'cannot,' viz. That it is said of men, they cannot do such or such a thing, because of their averseness and indisposition to it, which he exemplifieth in that of Christ to the Pharisees, John viii. 43. he afterward more than intimateth, that this is the sense, wherein the words 'cannot sin' are in this place to be taken; sect. 34. So that he will not allow the Holy Ghost to speak the truth, although he take his words in what sense he pleaseth. Yea, and adding a fifth sense, sect. 31. which is all it seemeth he could find out (for we have heard not of any more), he denieth that to be the meaning of the place, and so shutteth up the mind of the Holy Ghost into some of those significations, wherein if the words be taken, he saith, they are false. The discourse of Mr. Goodwin, sect. 28—30. (being taken up with the consideration of the various significations of the word 'cannot' and his inferences thereon; taking it in this place, this way or that way, then it is so or so, shewing himself very skilful at fencing and warding off the force of our arguments, as perhaps his thoughts of himself were upon a review of what he had done) we are not concerned in. And though it were very easy to manifest that in the distribution of his instances, for the exemplification of the several significations which in part he feigneth, and fasteneth upon the words, he hath been overtaken with many gross mistakes, some of them occasioned by other corrupt principles than those now under consideration, yet none of the senses insisted on by him, coming really up to the intendment of the Holy Ghost without any disadvantage to our cause in hand, being wholly unconcerned therein, we may pass by that whole harangue.

That which looketh towards the argument under consideration, appeareth first in sect. 31. which he thus proposeth. 'If the said argument understandeth the phrase 'cannot sin' according to the fifth and last import mentioned of the word 'cannot,' wherein it soundeth an utter and absolute incapacity and impossibility, then in this sense the major proposition is granted: viz. he that doth not, nor can sin, cannot fall away from his faith; yet the minor is tardy which saith, Whosoever is born of God sinneth not, neither can sin; for he that is born of God is in no such incapacity of sinning; of sinning I mean in the sense formerly asserted to the Scrip-

ture in hand, which amounteth to an absolute impossibility for him so to sin.'

Ans. Because this seemeth to be the sense intended in the argument, and the minor proposition in this sense to be built upon the Scripture in hand, let us consider whether the reason which is assigned for the said assertion, doth necessarily enforce such a sense thereon. What we understand by this phrase both as to that sin that is here intended, and that impossibility of committing it, or falling into it often in that expression 'cannot' hath been before discovered. An impossibility it is of the event, from the causes above-mentioned that the Holy Ghost intendeth. An utter and absolute incapacity to sin, on any account, we assert not; an impossibility of so sinning, in respect of the event, for the reasons and from the causes above-mentioned, the Holy Ghost averreth. In this sense the first proposition is granted, He that doth not commit sin nor can sin, cannot fall away from his faith, or can utterly lose it. The minor, which is the express language of the Holy Ghost, is questioned and found tardy; that is, as I suppose, false; and the reason is added, namely, 'that he that is born of God is in no such incapacity of sinning;' that is, of sinning in that kind of sinning which is here intended, which amounteth to an impossibility for him so to sin: not to play fast and loose, under those ambiguous expressions of incapacity and absolute impossibility, the event is positively denied upon the account of the prohibiting causes of it, and the incapacity asserted, relateth not to the internal frame and principle only, but respecteth also other considerations. Whether these are such as to bear the weight of this exposition, is that which cometh nextly to be discussed, viz. the causes of this state and condition, of those who are thus born of God, and the reasons investing that universal proposition, 'every one that is born of God cannot sin:' with a necessary truth.

In the reasons added of the former affirmation, there is an emphatical distribution of the two parts of the predicate of the former proposition, by the way of ascending to a more vehement confirmation of them. 'He that is born of God sinneth not;' but why so? 'His seed remaineth; neither can he sin;' why so? 'because he is born of God.' It is an expressive pursuit of the same thing, and not a redoubling

of the proposition; and this contexture of the words, is so emphatically significant, that it seemeth strange how any head of opposition can be made against it. There is no reason, then, to resolve the words into two propositions of distinct consideration each from other; it being one and the same thing that the apostle intendeth to express, though proceeding to heighten the certainty of the thing, in the minds of them to whom he delivered it, by the contexture of the words which he maketh use of. What is meant, or intended by the 'seed of God,' we need not dispute; the argument of the apostle lieth not in the words 'seed of God,' nor in the word 'abideth,' but in the whole, 'The seed of God abideth;' and therefore it were to no purpose at all, to follow Mr. Goodwin in his considerations of the word 'seed,' and then of the 'seed of God,' and then of the word 'abideth,' divided one from another. The sum of his long answer is, the word 'seed' doth not import any such thing as is aimed at from the text, nor the word 'abide,' but to the whole proposition, 'the seed of God abideth in him;' as produced to confirm the former assertion of the not sinning of the persons spoken of, there is nothing spoken at all; I shall therefore briefly confirm the argument in hand, by the strength here communicated unto it, by the Holy Ghost, and then consider what is answered to any part of it, or objected to the interpretation insisted on. That, 'he that sinneth not, neither can sin,' in the sense explained, shall never fall away totally or finally from God, is granted. That believers sin not, nor can sin, so, or in the manner mentioned, besides the testimony of the Holy Ghost, worthy of all acceptation in the clear assertion of it, we have the reason thereof manifested, in the discovery of the causes of its truth. The first reason is, 'because the seed of God abideth in them.' A tacit grant seemeth to be made; that fruit sometimes may not visibly appear upon them, as the case is with a tree in winter, when it casts its leaves: but its seed remaineth. Grace may abide in the habit, in, and under a winter of temptation, though it doth not exert itself in bearing any such actual fruit, as may be ordinarily visible. The word of God is sometimes called 'seed incorruptible;' seed causatively, as being an instrument in the hand of God, whereby he planteth the seed of life and holiness in the heart; that

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it is not the outward word, but that which is produced, and effected by it, through the efficacy of the Spirit of God, that is by seed intended, is evident from the use and nature of it. And it is abiding in the person in whom it is. Whatever it is, it is called 'seed,' not in respect of that from whence it cometh, as is the cause and reason of that appellation of other seed, but in respect of that which it produceth, which ariseth and ensueth upon it: and it is called the 'seed of God,' because God useth it for the regeneration of his. Being from God, being the principle of the regeneration of them in whom it is, abiding in them even when it hath brought forth fruit, and continuing so to do, it can be no other but the new creature, new nature, inward man, new principle of life, or habit of grace, that is bestowed upon all believers, whence they are regenerate, quickened, or born again, of which we have spoken before.

This seed, saith the Holy Ghost, abideth, or remaineth in him. Whatever falling or withering he may seem to have, or hath, this seed, the seed of God remaineth in him. The principle of his new life abideth; some exceptions are made as we shall see afterward, to the signification of the word (μένει) 'remaineth,' and instances given where it signifieth for 'to be,' and denoteth the essence of a thing, not its duration. That to abide, or remain, is the proper signification of the word, I suppose will not be questioned. That it may in some place be used in another sense, is not disputed. All that lieth under consideration here, is, whether the word in this place be used properly, according to its genuine and first signification, or no? It supposeth indeed 'to be' also; but properly signifieth only to abide or remain. Now if nothing can be advanced from the text, or context, from the matter treated on, or the parallel significancy of some expression that is in conjunction with it, that should enforce us to carry it from its proper use and signification, the instancing of other places, if any such be, wherein it is restrained to denote being, and not duration, is altogether impertinent to the business in hand. When an argument is urged from any place of Scripture, to pick out any word in the text, and to manifest that it hath been used improperly in some other place, and therefore must be so in that, is a procedure so far from an ingenious answer, that it will

scarce pass for a tolerable shift or evasion. To remain, then, or to abide, is the proper signification of this word, and nothing is in the least offered to manifest that it must necessarily in this place be diverted from its proper use.

According to the import of the word, the seed of God remaineth in believers; now that remaining of the seed, is the cause of their not sinning that sin, or in that manner, as the apostle here denieth them to be liable to sin. For that is the reason he giveth why they cannot sin, even because the seed of God remaineth in them. Mr. Goodwin granteth, that this seed remaineth in believers always, unless they sin by a total defection from God. Of not sinning the sin of total defection from God, the remaining or abiding of this seed is the cause. Whilst that abideth, they cannot sin, that sin, for it is an unquestionable cause and uncontrollable of their not so doing. This seed therefore must be utterly lost, and taken away, before any such sin can be committed. Now if the seed cannot be lost, without the commission of the sin which cannot be committed till it be lost, neither can the seed be lost, nor the sin be committed. The same thing cannot be before and after itself. He that cannot go such a journey, unless he have such a horse, and cannot have such a horse unless he go such a journey, is like to stay at home. In what sense the words 'cannot sin' are to be taken, was before declared. That there are sins innumerable, whereinto men may fall notwithstanding this seed, is confessed. Under them all, this seed abideth; so it would not do under that which we cannot sin, because it abideth; but because it abideth, that sin cannot be committed.

The latter part of the reason of the apostle's assertion, is, 'for he is born of God;' which is indeed a driving on the former to its head and fountain. What it is to be born of God we need not dispute. It was sufficiently discovered in the mention that was made before of the seed of God. God, by his Holy Spirit bestowing on us a new spiritual life which by nature we have not, and in respect of whose want we are said to be dead, is frequently said to beget us; James i. 14. and we are said to be born of God. He is the sovereign disposer, dispenser, and supreme fountain of that life, which is so bestowed on us, which we are begotten again unto, and

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that may obstruct the thoughts of any, in closing with the interpretation given, I shall consider, and remove out of the way. 1. Then, he giveth you this interpretation of these words, 'sinneth not, or cannot sin: Every one that hath been born of God sinneth not; i. e. Whosoever hath by the word and Spirit of God been made partaker of the divine nature, so as to resemble God in the frame and constitution of his heart and soul, doth not under such a frame, or change of heart as this make a trade or practice of sinning, or walking in any course of inordinateness in the world. Yea (saith he) in the latter proposition, every such person doth not only or simply refrain sinning in such a sense, but he cannot sin; (i. e.) he hath a strong and potent disposition in him which carrieth him another way, for he hath a strong antipathy or averseness of heart and soul against all sin, especially all such kind of sinning.'

Ans. 1. What is meant by being 'born of God,' the way whereby any come so to be, the universality of the expression requiring a necessary cause of its severity, with the like attendencies of the proposition have been before declared.

2. What Mr. Goodwin intendeth by such a frame and constitution of spirit and soul, as may resemble God, with his denial of the bestowing on us from God a vital principle of grace, wherein the renovation in us of his image should consist, hath in part also been already discovered, and will yet farther be so, in our consideration of his rare notion of regeneration, and its consisting in a man's return to the innocent and harmless estate wherein he was born.

3. That 'sinneth not' is sinneth not that sin, or so sinneth, not as to break his relation to God as a child, hath been already also manifested, and the reader is not to be burdened with repetition.

4. In the interpretation given of the latter phrase 'he cannot sin,' I cannot so sin against the light of the text, as to join with Mr. Goodwin in it. It is not the antipathy of his heart to sin, but the course of his walking with God, in respect of sin, that the apostle treateth on. His internal principleing against sin, he hath, from being born of God, and the abiding of his seed in him, of which this, that 'he cannot sin,' is asserted as the effect. 'He cannot sin;' that is, he cannot so sin, upon the account of his being born of God

(thence indeed he hath not only a potent disposition another way, and antipathy to evil, but a vital principle, with an everlasting enmity, and repugnancy to, and inconsistency with, any such sin, or sinning as is intimated); and that he cannot sin, is the consequent and effect thereof, and is so affirmed to be, by the Holy Ghost.

Nextly, Mr. Goodwin giveth you the reason of this assertion used by the apostle, why such a one, as of whom he speaketh, sinneth not, and cannot sin. 'Now the reason, saith the apostle, why such a person committeth not sin in the sense explained, is because his seed, the seed of God, by whom, of which, he was born of him, remaineth in him, (i. e.) is, or hath an actual and present being, or residence in him: and that in this place it doth not signify any perpetual abiding, or any abiding in relation to the future, is evident; because the abiding of the seed here spoken of, is given as the reason, why he that is born of God, doth not commit sin, (i. e.) doth not frequently walk in any course of known sin. Now nothing in respect of any future permanency or continuance of being, can be looked upon as the cause of an effect, but only in respect of the present being or residence of it. The reason why the soul moveth to-day, is not because it will move or act the body to-morrow, or because it is in the body to-day, upon such terms, that it will be in to-morrow also much less because it is an immortal substance; but simply because it is now or this day in the body. So the reason why angels at this day do the will of God, is not because they have such a principle of holiness, or obedience in them, which they cannot put off, or lose to eternity, but because of such a principle as we speak of, residing in them at present: therefore, when John assigneth the remaining of the seed of God in him that is born of him, for the reason why he doth not commit sin, certain it is that by this remaining of the seed he meaneth nothing else but the present residence or abode thereof in this person; and if his intent had been either to assert, or imply a perpetual residence of this seed in him that is born of God, it had been much more proper for him to have saved it for a reason of the latter proposition, He that is born of God cannot sin, than to have subjoined it as a reason of the former; for though the future continuance of the thing in being, can be no reason of the ef-

fact present, yet it will be a ground or reason of the continuance of a present effect.'

Ans. I have thus at large transcribed this discourse, because it is the sum of what Mr. Goodwin hath to offer for the weakening of our argument from this place; of what weight this is, will quickly appear. For,

1. This reason, 'the seed abideth in him,' though brought in illatively, in respect of what was said before, 'he doth not commit sin,' yet hath its causal influence chiefly into that which followeth, 'he cannot sin.' To make good what was first spoken, of his not committing sin that is born of God, the apostle discovereth the cause of it, which so far secureth the truth of that expression, as that it causeth it to ascend, and call them up higher, to a certain impossibility of doing of that which was only at first simply denied. Neither is this assertion, 'the seed of God abideth in him,' any otherwise a reason of the first assertion, 'he committeth not sin,' than as it is the cause of the latter, 'he cannot sin.' Now Mr. Goodwin granteth, in the close of his discourse, that the future continuance of a thing in being, is, or may be, the cause of the continuance of an effect which at present it produceth; and what Mr. Goodwin may more curiously discover of the intent of the apostle, his words plainly assert the continuance and abode of the seed of God in them in whom it is; and using it as he doth, for a reason of the latter clause of that proposition, 'he cannot sin,' he speaketh properly enough, so great a master (of one language at least) as Mr. Goodwin being judge.

2. The reason insisted on by the apostle, is neither from the word 'seed' nor from the word 'abideth' nor from the nature of the seed simply considered, nor from its permanency and continuance, 'the seed abideth;' so that it is no exception to the intendment of the apostle, to assert the abiding of the seed, not to be a sufficient cause of the proposition, because its abiding or permanency is not a cause of present not sinning, for it is not asserted that it is. His present not sinning in whom it is, is from God, his being born of God by the seed, his continuance and estate of not sinning (both which are intended), is from the abiding of the seed. The whole condition of the person, that 'he sinneth not, neither can sin' (which terms regard his continued

estate) is from the whole proposition, 'the seed of God abideth in him.' Separate the permanency of the seed, which is asserted in the consideration of it, and it respects only and solely, the continuance of the effect which is produced by it as seed, or of the estate wherein any one is placed, by being born of God. All that Mr. Goodwin hath to offer in this case, is, that the abiding of the seed, is so asserted to be the reason of that part of the proposition 'he commits not sin,' as not to be the cause τῆς αὐξήσεως, 'he cannot sin;' when the abiding of the seed, singly considered, is not used as any reason at all of the first, nor in the proposition as it lieth, 'the seed abideth' any otherwise, but as it is the cause of the latter, 'he cannot sin.'

3. Even the expression 'he committeth not sin,' denoteth not only the present actual frame and walking of him of whom it is spoken, but his estate and condition: being once born of God he committeth not sin; no one that is so born of God doth; none in the state and condition of a regenerate person doth so; that is, in his course and walking to the end; and this is argued not so much distinctly to the permanency of the seed, as from the seed with such an adjunct.

4. Mr. Goodwin's allusions to the soul, and the obedience of angels, are of little use or none at all to the illustration of the business in hand. For though the reason why the soul moveth the body to-day, is not because it will move it to-morrow, yet the reason why the body moveth and cannot but do so, is because it hath the soul abiding in it, and he that shall say, 'he that liveth, moveth, for he hath a soul abiding in him and cannot but move,' shall speak properly enough. And the reason why the angels do the will of God in heaven, that is, actually continue in so doing it, because they have such a confirmed and uncontrollable principle of obedience. So that all these exceptions amount not to the least weakening of the apostle's arguments.

Sect. 32. Our author giveth two instances to prove that the word μένει in the Scripture, signifieth sometimes only to be, and not to abide, and they are, the one, John xiv. and the other, 1 John iii. 14. And one argument to manifest that in the place under consideration, it must needs signify a present abode and being, and not a continuance, &c.

Ans. 1. If any such places be found, yet it is confessed that it is an unusual sense of the word, and a thousand places of that kind, will not enforce it to be so taken in another place, unless the circumstances of it, and matter whereabout it treateth, enforce that sense, and will not bear that which is proper.

2. Mr. G. doth not make it good by the instances he produceth, that the word is tied up in any place, to denote precisely only the being of a thing, without relation to its abiding and continuance. Of the one, John xiv. 17. 'But ye know him because he remaineth with you, and shall be in you:' saith he, 'the latter clause, Shall be in you, will be found a mere tautology, if the other phrase, Abideth with you, importeth a perpetual residence or inbeing.'

But that this phrase 'abideth with you' importeth the same with the phrase in the foregoing verse, where it is clearly expounded by the addition of the term 'for ever' (that he may abide with you for ever), I suppose cannot be questioned. Nor,

2. Is there any the least appearance of a tautology in the words. His remaining with believers, being the thing promised, and his inbeing, the manner of his abode with them. Also the 1 John xiv. μένει ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ, doth not simply denote an estate or condition, but an estate or condition in its nature, without the interposition of almighty grace, abiding and permanent: so that neither have we yet any instance of restraining the significancy of the word, as pretended, produced: nor if any place could be so, would it in the least enforce that acceptation of the word in this place contended about. Wherefore, Mr. Goodwin, as I said, addeth an argument, to evince that the word must necessarily be taken in the sense by him insisted on in this place, which is indeed a course to the purpose, if his argument prove so in any measure; it is this: 'Because such a signification of it would render the sense altogether inconsistent with the scope of the apostle, which is to exhort Christians unto righteousness and love of the brethren; now it is contrary to common sense itself, to signify unto those whom we persuade to any duty, any such thing which imports an absolute certainty or necessity of their doing it, whether they take care or use any means for the doing of it or no: and a clear case it is,

estate) is from the whol...
deth in him.' Separat... ...g of the seed of
is asserted in the con... ...porteth a like cer-
and solely, the conti... ...nat duty whereunto
by it as seed, or of t...
being born of God ... ...een spared. The argu-
this case, is, that ... ...spersion of the infinite
the reason of th... ...contrary to all reason and
sin,' as not to ... ...the thing in question, be-
when the abid... ...es. That there is any thing
as any reason ... ...g to our interpretation of it,
lieth, 'the s... ...ecessity of men's doing any
of the latter ... ...e to use the means of doing
3. Eve... ...ge. The abiding of the seed
noteth no... ...shall effectually cause them, in
of whom ... ...s of not sinning, that eventually
once bor... ...and that a certainty of the use of
born of ... ...argument to prove that their neces-
gener... ...oved, whether they use means, yea
to th... ...use means, is amongst the means
pern ... ...and this they shall do, upon the ac-
adj... ...seed. That indeed, which is opposed,
... ...promise to work effectually in us by the
di ... ...accomplishment of an appointed end,
t... ...eareth useless and vain, all his exhorta-
v... ...those means. This is Mr. Goodwin's ar-
... ...place itself, to enforce that improper ac-
... ...word 'remaineth' in us.

... ...th of Mr. Goodwin's long discourse upon
... ...Scripture, is but a fencing with himself and rais-
... ...and answering of them suitably to his own
... ...wherein we are not in the least concerned. There
... ...thing from the beginning to the end of it, that
... ...impeach our interpretation of the place, or im-
... ...gress of our argument, but only a flourish set
... ...an exposition, which if he were desired to give in
... ...in terms of a plain downright significancy, I am
... ...aded, he would be hardly put to it, to let us
... ...his mind and conceptions of this place of Scrip-
... ...of this subject, and in answer to his fifth ar-
... ...e chapter, this is the issue.

CHAP. XVI.

Mr. G.'s seventh argument about the tendency of the doctrine of the saints' apostacy as to their consolation proposed. Considered: what that doctrine offereth for the consolation of the saints, offered; the impossibility of its affording the least true consolation manifested. The influence of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance into their consolation. The medium whereby Mr. G. confirms his argument examined; what kind of nurse for the peace and consolation of the saints, the doctrine of apostacy is, whether their obedience be furthered by it; what are the causes and springs of true consolation. Mr. G.'s eighth argument proposed to consideration. Answer thereunto, the minor proposition considered; the Holy Ghost not afraid of the saints' miscarriages. The confirmation of his minor proposition proposed and considered. The discourse assigned to the Holy Ghost by Mr. G. according to our principles. Considered. Exceptions against it, the first. The second. The third. The fourth. The fifth. The sixth. The seventh. The foundation of Mr. G.'s pageant everted. The proceedings of the Holy Ghost in exhortations according to our principles. Sophisms in the former discourse farther discovered. His farther plea in this case proposed. Considered. The instance of Christ and his obedience considered and vindicated as to the application of it, to the business in hand. Mr. G.'s last argument proposed. Examined. 1 John ii. 19. *explained, Vindicated. Argument from thence for the perseverance of the saints. Mr. G.'s exceptions thereunto. Considered and removed. The same words farther perused. Mr. G.'s consent with the remonstrants manifested by his trascriptions from their synodalia. Our argument from* 1 John ii. 19. *fully cleared. The conclusion of the examination of Mr. G.'s arguments for the apostacy of the saints.*

The seventh argument which Mr. Goodwin insisteth upon in the 36th section of his 13th chapter contains one of the greatest rarities he hath to shew in the whole pack, concerning the influence of the doctrine of the saints' apostacy into their consolation in their walking with God, an undertaking so uncapable of any logical confirmation, as that though Mr. Goodwin interweave his discourse concerning it with a syllogism, yet he quickly leaves that thorny path, and pursues it only with a rhetorical flourish of words, found out and set in order to deceive. At the head then of his discourse he placeth this argument, as it is called:

'That doctrine whose genuine and proper tendency is to advance the peace and joy of the saints in believing, is of a natural sympathy with the gospel, and upon this account

a truth; such is the doctrine, which informeth the saints of a possibility of their total and final falling away.' *Ergo.*

The proposition of this syllogism he supposes we will grant, and (not to trouble the reader with the qualifications and limitations formerly annexed to that which proposed the furtherance of the obedience of the saints, as a proof of the truth of any doctrine) for my part I do. For the proof of the assumption wherein alone Mr. Goodwin's interest in this argument doth lie, he refers us to his 9th chapter; where, as he tells us (if we may believe him), he hath undeniably demonstrated the truth of it. But we have considered whatever looks that way in that chapter, and have found it all as chaff and stubble, before the breath of the Spirit of the Lord in the word. That which lies upon his shoulders to support (a burden too heavy for him to bear), and whose demonstration he hath undertaken is, that it tends to the peace, joy, and consolation of the saints of God, in their walking with him (which arises from and solely depends upon that assurance they have of their eternal fruition of him through Christ) to be instructed; that indeed they are in themselves weak, unable to do any thing as they ought, that they have no strength to continue in the mercy of God, but carry about with them a body of death, and that they are continually exposed to a world of temptations, whereby many strong men fall down, are thrust through and slain every day; and that in this condition there is no consideration of the immutability or unchangeableness of God, that may secure them of the continuance of his love to them; no eternal purpose of his that he will preserve them, and keep them, through his power; no promise of not leaving them, or of giving them such supplies of his Spirit and grace that they shall never forsake, nor leave him; nothing in the covenant, or oath of God whereby it is confirmed, to assure them of an abiding, and not-to-be-destroyed communion with him; that Christ by his death and oblation hath not so taken away the guilt of their sins, nor laid such a sure foundation for the destruction of the power of them, as that they shall not arise either way to their ruin; that he intercedes not for their preservation in faith and holiness, upon the account of which state and condition of things, many of the most eminent saints that ever served in this world have utterly fallen out of his love and

favour, and have been cast out of covenant, from whence, though perhaps some few have been recovered, yet for the greatest part of them, have perished everlastingly (as is the state in reference unto many in every generation): only such may do well to consider what a fearful and desperate issue their apostacy will have, if they should so fall, and what an eminent reward, with what glory is proposed to them, if they persevere. That I say the instruction of the saints, in this doctrine, is a singular means of promoting their consolation and establishing their peace, is that which (doubtless with undervaluing thoughts of all with whom he hath to do) he hath undertaken to prove. I doubt not but that Mr. Goodwin thought sometimes of the good old rule, 'Sumite materiam vestris, qui scribitis, equam viribus: et versate diu, quid ferre recusent quid valeant humeri.' Self-confidence is hereby settled and fixed with considerations; and though Mr. G. in the close of this section, tells us, 'that sundry godly and seriously religious persons, when they heard this doctrine published which he now asserts, with their whole hearts blessed God for it:' yet truly I cannot but question whether, yea, I must positively deny that ever any saint of God received consolation by the doctrine of the saints' apostacy, a lie exceedingly unsuited to the production of any such effect, any farther than that all error whatsoever is apt to defile and cauterize the conscience, so deceiving it with senselessness for peace. Perhaps some of Mr. Goodwin's hearers, who either were so ignorant, or so negligent, as not to be acquainted with this doctrine before, in the attempts made for that the propagation of it, by the latter brood of prelates and Arminians amongst us, upon his delivery of it with enticing words of human wisdom, helped on by the venerable esteem they have of his transcendent parts and abilities, though the cunning of Satan, improving the itching after new doctrines, which is fallen upon the minds and spirits of many professors in this age, have rejoiced under the shadow of this bramble, set up to rule in their congregation; and (according as is the constant manner of all, in our days that are ensnared with any error be it never so pernicious) have blessed God for it, professing they never found rest nor peace before; yet I no way question for such as fear the Lord, and are yet bowed down under the weight,

and carried away with the strength of Mr. Goodwin's rhetoric for a season, will quickly find a fire proceeding out of that newly enthroned doctrine, preying upon and consuming all their joy, peace, and consolation, or (which I rather hope) a fire proceeding out of their faith (the faith once delivered to the saints), to the utter confusion and consumption of this bramble scratching error. In the meantime if the eminent appearance of many thousands of the saints of God in this nation (whereof many are fallen asleep, and many continue to this day), testifying and bearing witness to the joy and consolation they have found, and that upon spiritual demonstrative grounds, in being cast into the mould of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance for many days, be of no weight with Mr. Goodwin, I know not why his single testimony (which yet as to the matter of fact I no way question) concerning some few persons by himself seduced into a persuasion of their apostacy, blessing God for the discovery made to them (the constant practice of all persons in their first entanglement, in the foulest and grossest errors whatever), should sway us much to any good liking of it.

The influence of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance into their consolation, hath been sufficiently already evinced, when we manifested the support of their faith and love, the conquest of their fear and troubles thereby; so that I shall not need farther to insist thereon. It was in my thoughts, indeed, to have handled the nature of gospel consolation, that which God is so abundantly willing the heirs of promise should receive, at large, both as to the nature and causes of it, the means of its preservation, the oppositions that lie against it, and by all the considerations of it, to have manifested, that it is utterly impossible to keep it alive one moment in the heart of a believer, without the contribution of supportment it receives from the doctrine in hand. And that those who refuse to receive it, as usually delivered, indeed have none, nor can have any drop of it, but what is instilled into them, from and by the power and efficacy, which secretly in and upon their hearts that truth hath, which in words they oppose; all their peace and comfort being indeed absolutely proportioned to that which the doctrine of the saints' perseverance tends to confirm, and to nothing else. But this discourse growing under my hands

and all thought or expectation, I shall now only keep me to the removal of the exceptions made against it, and then to a close.

I must not leave this argument, without taking notice of the medium, whereby Mr. Goodwin supposeth himself to have confirmed the truth of the assumption, laid down in the entrance, or to have manifested 'the good complexion' (he phrases it) of that nurse he hath provided' for the consolation of the saints: a nurse with breasts of flint and a heart of iron, hath this cruel man provided for them; a nurse whom God will never admit into his family, nor ever expose his children's lives to any such wolf, or tiger, as will certainly starve them, if not devour them; rather a curst, cruel an accursed stepdame, than a nurse; who, when the children ask for bread, gives them a stone; and when they beg for fish, gives them a scorpion; a false and treacherous hireling, doing not the least service for God, but labouring to stir up strife in his family, to set his poor children, and their heavenly Father at variance, filling them with hard thoughts of him, as one that takes little or no care for them, and discouraging them in that obedience, which he requireth at their hands, continually belieing their Father to them, and that in reference to the most desirable excellencies of his faithfulness, truth, mercy, and grace; never speaking one good or comfortable word to them all their days, nor once urging them to do their duty, but withholding a rod, yea scorpions over their backs; and casting the eternal flames of hell into their faces; this is that sanguine, indeed truly spiritually bloody complexion of this new nurse, which is offered to be received in the room of that sad melancholy piece, of the perseverance of the saints. Thus then he proceeds:

'The consolation of true believers, depends upon their obedience, their obedience is furthered by this doctrine, and therefore their consolation also.'

Ans. What are the springs of true spiritual heavenly consolation, the consolation which God is willing believers should receive, whence it flows, the means of its continuance and increase, how remote it is from a sole dependency on our own obedience, hath been in part before declared; but yet if the next assertion can be made good, viz.

'That the doctrine of the saints' apostacy, hath a tendency instituted of God, to the promotion of their obedience and holiness,' I shall not contend about the other, concerning the issuing of their consolation from thence. All that really is offered in the behalf of apostacy, as to its serviceableness in this kind is, that it is suited to ingenerate in believers a fear of hell, which will put them upon all ways of mortifying the flesh, and the fruits of it, which otherwise would bring them thereunto. And is this indeed the great mystery of the gospel? Is this Christ's way of dealing with his saints? Or is it not a falling from grace, to return again unto the law? Those of whom alone we speak, who are concerned in this business are all of them taken into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, are every one of them partakers of that Spirit with whom is liberty, are all endued with a living principle of grace, faith, and love, and are constrained by the love of Christ to live to him, are all under grace and not under the law, have their sins in some measure begun to be mortified, and the flesh with the lusts thereof, the old man, with all his ways and wills crucified by the death and cross of Christ, brought with their power and efficacy by the Spirit into their hearts, are all delivered from that bondage wherein they were for fear of death and hell all their days, by having Christ made redemption unto them. I say that these persons should be most effectually stirred up to obedience, by the dread and terror of that iron rod of vengeance and hell, and that they should be so, by God's appointment, is such a new, such another gospel, as if preached by an angel from heaven, we should not receive. That indeed no motive can be taken from hence, or from any thing in the doctrine by Mr. Goodwin contended for, suited to the principle of gospel obedience in the saints, that no sin or lust whatsoever was ever mortified by it, that it is a clog, hinderance, and burden, to all saints as far as they have to do with it, in the ways of God, hath been before demonstrated; and therefore, leaving it with all the consolation that it affords, unto those who of God are given up thereunto, we proceed to the consideration of another argument, his eighth in this case, which is thus proposed, sect. 37.

'That doctrine which evacuates and turns into weakness and folly, all the gracious counsels of the Holy Ghost,

which consist partly in the diligent information which he gives unto the saints from place to place, concerning the hostile, cruel, and bloody mind and intention of Satan against them; partly in detecting and making known all his subtle stratagems, his plots, methods, and dangerous machinations against them; partly also in furnishing them with special weapons of all sorts, whereby they may be able to grapple with him, and to triumph over him; partly again in those frequent admonitions and exhortations, to quit themselves like men in resisting him, which are found in the Scripture; and lastly in professing his fear lest Satan should circumvent and deceive them; that doctrine, I say, which reflects disparagement and vanity upon all these most serious and gracious applications of the Holy Ghost, must needs be a doctrine of vanity and error, and consequently that which opposeth it by a like necessity, a truth; but such is the common doctrine of absolute and infallible perseverance.' *Ergo.*

Ans. Not to engage into any needless contest about ways of arguing, when the design and strength of the argument is evident, I shall only remark two things upon this.

First, The Holy Ghost professing his fear lest Satan should beguile believers, is a mistake. It was Paul that was so afraid, not the Holy Ghost, though he wrote that fear by the appointment and inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The apostle was jealous lest the saints should by the craft of Satan be seduced into errors and miscarriages, which yet argues not their final defection; this, indeed, he records of himself; but of the fears of the Holy Ghost, arising from his uncertainty of those issues of the things and want of power to prevent the coming on of the things feared, I suppose there is no mention. And,

Secondly, That the consequent of the supposition in the inference made upon it, is not so clear to me as to Mr. Goodwin, viz. 'Suppose any doctrine to be false, whatsoever doctrine is set up in opposition to it, is true.' I have known, and so hath Mr. Goodwin also, when the truth hath lain between opposite doctrines, assaulted by both, entertained by neither; with these observations I pass the major of this syllogism, the minor he thus confirms:

'If the saints be in no possibility of being finally over-

come by Satan, or the miscarrying in the great and most important business of their salvation by his snares and subtleties, all that operoseness and diligence of the Holy Ghost, in those late-mentioned addressments of his unto them, in order to their final conquest over Satan, will be found of very light consequence, of little concernment to them: yea, if the said addressments of the Holy Ghost, be compared with the state and condition of the saints, as the said doctrince of perseverance representeth and affirmeth it to be, the utter uselessness and impertinency of them, will much more evidently appear.'

Ans. What possibility or not possibility the saints are in of final apostacy from God, what assurance themselves have, may have, or have not, concerning their perseverance, with what is the use of admonitions and exhortations to them in that condition, hath been already declared; for the present, I shall only add, that let their final apostacy, in respect of the event be never so impossible, yet in the state and condition wherein they are, and from the things which they are exercised about, with the principles on which they proceed, and the ways whereby they are led on, considerations enough may be raised to set forth those exhortations, admonitions, and encouragements, appointed by the Holy Ghost, to be used and insisted on in the administration of the word, in the beauty and splendour of infinite wisdom, love, and kindness. The glory of God being so eminently concerned, as it is in the obedience and fruitfulness of the saints; the honour of the Lord Jesus in this world, with the advancement and propagation of the gospel, in like manner relating thereunto; their own peace lying so much as it doth upon their close walking with God, the Spirit being so grieved by their falling into sin, as he is, God so dishonoured, and themselves exposed to such fearful desertions, darkness, trouble, sorrow, and disquietments, as they are, upon their being overcome by the temptations of Satan, and prevailed upon to turn aside into ways and sins short of total apostacy, and it being the purpose of the Lord, to lead them on in obedience, in ways suitable to that nature, he created them withal, and that new nature wherewith he hath endued them (both apt to be wrought upon by motives, exhortations, and persuasions), without any such supposal, as that of final apostacy;

there is a sufficient bottom and foundation of exalting the motives and admonitions insisted on, to the possession of that glory, of wisdom, and goodness which is their due. But Mr. Goodwin having borrowed another pageant from the remonstrants, had a great mind to shew it to the world in its English dress, and therefore introduces the Holy Ghost, thus speaking in the admonitions above pointed at:

'Suppose we then the Holy Ghost should speak thus unto the saints, Oh ye that truly believe, who by virtue of the promises of that God that cannot lie, are fully persuaded and possessed that ye shall be kept by God, by his irresistible grace, in true faith until death; so that though Satan should set all his wits on work, and by all his stratagems, snares, and cunning devices, seek to destroy you; yea, though he should entice you away from God, by the allurements of the world, and entangle you with them again, yea, and should cause you to run and rush headlong against the light of your own consciences, into all manner of horrid sins, yet shall all his attempts and assaults upon you in every kind be in vain, and you shall be in never the more danger, or possibility of perishing: unto you, I say, attend and consider how sore and dangerous a contest you are like to be engaged in, for you are to wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, the governors of this world, and spiritual wickednesses, against that old serpent the devil, the great red dragon who was a murderer from the beginning, and who still goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, who will set himself with all his might, to thrust you headlong into all manner of sins, and so to separate between you and your God for ever; and truly I am afraid, lest as the serpent by his subtlety deceived Eve, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Jesus Christ, lest the tempter should any way tempt you, and my labour about you be in vain; therefore watch, pray, resist him steadfast in the faith; take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to resist in an evil day, and having done all things stand fast; stand, having your loins girt with the girdle of truth, and the breastplate of righteousness upon you: would such an oration or speech as this be any way worthy the infinite wisdom of the Holy Ghost? Or is it not the part of a very weak and sim-

ple person to admonish a man, and that in a most serious and solemn manner of a danger threatening him, or hanging over his head, and withal to instruct him with great variety of direction and caution how to escape this danger, when as both himself knows, and the person admonished knows likewise, that it is a thing altogether impossible that ever the danger should befall him, or the evil against which he is so solemnly cautioned come upon him? Therefore those who make the Holy Ghost to have part and fellowship in such weakness as this are most insufferably injurious unto him.'

Ans. To support the stage for to act this part of the pageant in hand upon, there are many supposals fixed by our author, that are to bear up the weight of the whole, which upon trial will appear to be arrant false pretences, painted antics, that have not the least strength or efficacy for the end and purpose whereunto they are applied.

First, It is supposed that the end of all these admonitions, is merely and solely to prevent the saints from final apostacy; and that they are to beware of the wiles and assaults of Satan, only lest he prevail over them, to cause them to depart utterly from God; that this is supposed in this discourse is evident, because upon the granting of a promise, that they shall not be so prevailed against, they are judged all useless and ridiculous: now who knows not but that Satan may win now, and in some measure prevail against the saints, to the dishonour of God, the reproach of the gospel, grieving of the Spirit, and scandal of the church, although they fall not totally and finally from God; and that many of those admonitions tend to the preservation of believers from such falls and failings, is more evident than to need any demonstration by consideration of the particular instances.

Secondly, It supposeth, as is expressed, that believers may fall into 'all manner of horrid sins and abominations,' which is the thing in question, and by us punctually denied: whatever their surprisals may be, yet there are sins which they cannot fall into: and the great abomination of every sin, that it is committed with the whole heart, and with full consent, they are not at all exposed or liable unto, as hath been proved.

Thirdly, That there is an inconsistency between promises

and precepts, in reference to the same object; that God should promise to work any thing effectually in us, and yet require it of us is thought ridiculous, and on this account the great folly here imputed to the discourse framed for the Holy Ghost, is proposed to consist in this, that God should exhort us, to watch against the assaults of the devil, and yet promise that by his grace he will effectually work in us, and for us, the very same thing; a supposal destructive to the whole nature of the new covenant, easily disproved by innumerable instances.

Fourthly, That believers are to be wrought upon to obedience always, whatever the frame of their spirits be, by the same ways and means; thence it is that promises, promises of highest and greatest assurance, are in this discourse, coupled with cautions of the deepest charge, as though they must at the same time operate the same way to believers, or else the Holy Ghost be liable to be traduced, as inconsistent with himself. When the great variety that is in their spiritual frame and temper, the manifold temptations wherewith they are assaulted, the light and dark places they walk through &c. give occasion sufficient to the exercising towards them, all the 'piping' and 'mourning' that is provided for them.

Fifthly, That all believers are assured of their perseverance, and that to such a degree as not to fear any apostacy, or to care what becomes of them (that is assured to presumption not believing), and therefore are those cautions and admonitions of the Holy Ghost on that account, tending to stir up in them any godly care or fear rendered frustrate; when Mr. Goodwin himself thinks that very few of them, do upon any good and abiding foundation, know themselves to be believers. And we never once supposed that all of them have assurance of their perseverance, nor any of them upon the terms here proposed; all the strength of what is here insinuated, lies in this, that God gives assurance to men of the steadfastness and constancy of his love, under supposal of their falling into all manner of abominable sins; which supposal alone renders an inconsistency between the sense of the promises we embrace, and that of the admonitions that are given to the saints charging them to walk heedfully and to watch diligently against the attempts and assaults of

Satan. Now this supposal is in itself false and ridiculous: neither ever did the Lord, nor do we ever say he did, tender men assurance of his love on such terms; neither is it possible for any one for ever to have a true persuasion of his own perseverance under such notions.

Sixthly, That there is an inconsistency betwixt faithful promises of attaining an end by the use of means, and exhortation with admonitions to make use of those means; so that if it be supposed that God promiseth that Satan shall not in the issue prevail over us, prescribing to us the means whereby we shall be preserved from his prevalency, it is in vain to deal with us for the application of ourselves, unto the use of those means.

Seventhly, It is also supposed that an assurance of the love of God and the continuance of it to the saints unto the end, so that they shall be never utterly rejected by him is an effectual way and means to induce them to carnal and loose walking, and a negligence in those things which are a provocation to the eyes of his glory; and therefore, if he promise faithfully never to leave us nor forsake us, it is an inducement for us to conclude, let the devil now take his swing and do with us what he pleaseth. To exhort us to take care for the avoidance of his subtleties and opposition is a thing altogether ridiculous: the vanity of this supposal, hath been sufficiently before discovered and itself disproved.

Upon such hypotheses as these, I say, upon such painted posts, is the whole pageant erected which we are here engaged withal; and these being easily cast down, the whole rushes to the ground, in the room whereof, according to our principles, this following discourse may be supplied.

You that are true believers, called, justified, sanctified, by the Spirit and blood of Christ, adopted into my family, ingrafted in and united unto the Son of my love; I know your weakness, insufficiency, disability, darkness, how that without my Son and continual supply of his Spirit you can do nothing; the power of your indwelling sin, is not hid from me, how with violence it leads you captive to the law thereof; and though ye do believe, yet I know you have yet also some unhealed unbelief, and on that account are often overwhelmed with fears, sorrows, disconsolations, and troubles, and are ready often to think that your way is passed over

from me, and your judgment hidden from your God: and in this condition, I know the assaults, temptations, and oppositions of Satan that you are exposed to, how he goes up and down like a roaring lion seeking to destroy you; his ways, methods, wiles and baits (that he lays for you, and whereby he seeks to destroy you) are many, he acts against you as a serpent subtilely and wisely; as a lion dreadfully and fearfully, and with snares not of you, by yourselves to be resisted: you have principalities and powers to wrestle withal, and the darts of the wicked one to defend yourselves against, wherefore beware of him, be not ignorant of his devices, stand fast in the faith, take to you the whole armour of God, resist him, overcome him, cast him out by prayer, and the blood of the Lamb, watch night and day that you be not surprised nor seduced (as Eve was) by him, that he turn you not out of the way into paths leading to destruction, and thrust you headlong into such sins as will be a dishonour to me, a grief to my Spirit, a scandal to the church, and bitterness to your own souls; and as for me, who know your disability of yourselves to do any of these things, and so to hold to the end, because it pleased me to love you, and set my heart upon you, having chosen you before the foundation of the world, that you should be holy and unblameable before me in love, and having given my only Son unto you, who is your peace, and through whom you have received the atonement, with whom I will not deny you or withhold from you any thing that may safeguard your abiding with me unto salvation; I will, through the riches of my grace, work all your works for you, fulfilling in you all the good pleasure of my goodness and the work of faith with power; I will tread down Satan, this cruel, proud, malicious, bloody, enemy of your souls, under your feet; and though at any time he foil you, yet ye shall not be cast down, for I will take you up, and will certainly preserve you by my power, to the end of your hope, the salvation of your souls; whatever betide you, or befall you, I will never leave you, nor forsake you; the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall never be removed from you; comfort ye, be of good courage, and run with joy the race that is set before you.

This, I say, is the language which according to the

tenor of the doctrine whose maintenance we are engaged in, God speaks to his saints and believers, and if there be folly and inconsistency found therein, let the Scriptures vindicate and plead for themselves.

Secondly, For the close of this discourse of our author, charging this course of procedure with folly, viz. to give admonition to the use of means, when the end is certainly determined to issue upon the use of those means, he must first evince it as to the application of it to the business in hand, before I can close with him in the managing thereof: for the present I rather think the folly of this charge, as far as it looks towards the doctrine under consideration to arise from other things. As,

First, An impertinent comparison instituted between God and man in their admonitions and dealings with men; as though nothing might beseem him in spiritual things of eternal concernment, but what is squared to the rules of our proceedings one towards another, in things natural or civil. And,

Secondly, A false supposal that the end is promised and assured to any, without or besides the use of means, or walking according to the rules, precepts, and instructions given for that purpose, or for attainment of the end so promised. Now what folly there is to charge men to use means for the attaining of an end, when they are, although exhorted, also assured, that in their so doing, they shall attain the end aimed at, is yet under contest; and may pass for the present with those other ridiculous supposals, formerly mentioned.

But Mr. Goodwin proceeds farther in the vindication of this argument, sect. 38.

'And whereas,' saith he, 'they still plead, or pretend rather, that such admonitions as these lately specified may well stand with an unconditioned promise of perseverance, we have formerly shewed, that they are not able to make good this plea, nor to give any reasonable account of it, whereas they add that their sense and opinion is not, that it is a thing absolutely or every way impossible for true believers to fall away totally or finally from their faith, but [illegible]y willingly grant that true believers, what through [illegible] weakness, and what through the subtle baits and [illegible]s of Satan, may so fall away.

'I answer, But this is but a fig-leaf sought out to cover the nakedness of their opinion, which hath no strength at all nor weight in it. For what though it were in a thousand other respects never so possible for true believers to perish, yet if it be altogether impossible in such a respect which overrules all those others, and which will and of necessity must hinder the coming of it to pass, all those other notwithstanding, it is to be judged simply and absolutely impossible, and all those respects whereby it is pretended possible are not to be brought into account in such a case.'

Ans. Whether we are able to make good our plea concerning the consistency of admonitions with the promises of perseverance, Mr. Goodwin is not the sole judge; neither do either we or our plea stand or fall at his arbitrement; what hath been lately spoken for the reinforcement of that plea against his exceptions, he may if he please, take time to consider.

Secondly, For what is now added in this place as a part of that plea of ours, as it is here proposed we own not; we do not grant that true believers may fall away on any account whatever totally and finally, if the expression, 'may fall away,' relate to the issue and event; we say, indeed, that by the temptations of Satan believers may be prevailed against, to the committing of many sins, the root whereof is in themselves, whilst the lust remains in them which tempteth and ensnareth them, whereby God may be dishonoured, and their own consciences wounded, which is a sufficient ground and bottom for all the admonitions that are given them to beware of his deceits, to strengthen themselves against his assaults, and to be built upon, though through the grace and faithfulness of God and his goodwill manifested and secured unto them in his covenant and promises, he can never totally prevail against them.

'We say, moreover, that it is not from believers themselves, nor any thing in them, nor from any faith that they have received, that they cannot so fall finally away; there being in them a proneness to sin, and the seed of all sin still remaining, yea a root of bitterness ready to spring up and trouble them; but from those outward principles of the will, purposes, covenant, and promises of God which we have

formerly insisted on. Farther, that there is no need of granting any such possibility, taking that term as relating to the issue and event, and not the internal principle of operation in men, to manifest the harmony that is between the admonitions under consideration, and the promises we have insisted on; it being sufficiently evinced on other considerations; so that Mr. Goodwin's ensuing discourse concerning absolute impossibility is not at all related to any thing that we have asserted.

Thirdly, Neither yet doth the reason by Mr. Goodwin produced, in any measure convince what he intends, though we be not concerned therein; he will not easily persuade us that that which is possible in any respect, much less in many, and impossible only in one, is always to be judged simply and absolutely impossible; much less are we concerned in it, who say that simply and absolutely the falling away of believers is possible, namely, as the term 'possible' relates to the principle of operation in them; but in some respects only it is impossible, that is, not of itself, but in respect of the external prohibiting cause. It was absolutely and simply possible, that the bones of our Saviour should have been broken, in the nature of the thing itself; impossible, in respect of the decree of God; so are a thousand things absolutely possible in their own nature, as to the power of the causes whereby they might be produced, but impossible in respect of some external prohibiting cause; absolutely possible in respect of their proper cause and principle; impossible in respect of the event, upon the account of some external prohibiting cause as was shewed. So it is in the business in hand; we assert not any possibility in respect of the event; as though in the issue it might so come to pass, that believers should fall totally and finally from God, which is the thing we oppose; but grant it, in respect of the causes of such apostacy, with reference to the nature of the thing itself; though how the possibility might be reduced into act Mr. Goodwin cannot declare; as for the close of this section concerning the absolute, peremptory, irresistible, decree of perseverance which he ascribes to us as our assertion, when he shall have convinced us of the conditional, non-peremptory, reversible, de-

cree of God, which he endeavours to introduce in the place thereof, he may hear more of us, in the meantime *μένομεν ὥσπερ ἐσμεν.*

Sect. 39, 40. He seeks to alleviate the instance commonly given of our Saviour Christ, who though assured of the end (and in respect of whom it was utterly impossible that his glorious exaltation should not follow in the issue, he being wholly out of all danger of being detained under the power of death), yet he laboured, and prayed, and fasted, and resisted Satan's temptations, and watched against him, and dealt with him by weapons taken out of the word of God; and in especial when the devil urged him with the argument in hand, 'That there is no need of means or the using of them, when there is a certainty of the end, and an impossibility that it should otherwise fall out, or the end not be brought about and accomplished,' as he did when he tempted him to 'cast himself headlong from a pinnacle of the temple,' because the 'angels had charge over him, that not so much as his foot should be hurt against a stone,' whatever he did; as Satan intimated, which is the tenor of the argument wherewith we have to do, he returns to him the very answer that we insist upon, viz. that though it be the good pleasure of God to bring us to the end we aim at, yet are we not to tempt him by a neglect of the means which he hath appointed; it is true, there are arguments used to us that could have no place with Christ, being taken from the estate and condition of infirmity and weakness through sin, wherein we are; which is a ground only of an inference, that if Christ who was 'holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,' did yet watch and pray and contend against Satan, much more should we do so. But this doth not at all take off from the parity of reason that is in the case of diligent using of the means for the compassing of the end, that in some respect is under an impossibility of not being accomplished; for the removal of this instance Mr. Goodwin enters into a large discourse of the cause and reason vesting the Lord Christ with an immutability in good, and how it is not competent to any creature; which that it is, never entered into the thoughts of any to assert that I ever heard of; nor is it of the least importance to the removal of our instance as to its servicea-

bleness unto the end, for which it is produced; he tells us also, 'That in case men be caused necessitatingly and unavoidably to act righteously, it will take away all rewardableness from their actings; and the reason is, because such a necessitating of them, makes them merely passive, they having not any internal principle of their own to contract such a necessity;' which discourse is pursued with many other words to the same purpose; and a discourse it is,

First, exceeding irrelative to the business in hand; there is not any thing now under consideration, that should minister occasion at all, to consider the manner of our yielding obedience, and the way of God's grace, in the bringing forth the fruits thereof, but only of the consistency that is between admonitions for the using of the means, when it is supposed impossible that the end prevented by them should ever come to pass, which may, or may not be so, whatever be the manner and way of our yielding obedience upon the exertion of the efficacy of the grace of God; diversion is one of Mr. Goodwin's ordinary ways of warding those blows, which he is not able to bear.

Secondly, False charging a crime on the doctrine which he doth oppose whereof it is not guilty; neither it, nor they that maintain it, affirming that there is a necessitation upon the wills of men by the grace of God, such a necessitation as should in the least prejudice their freedom, or cause them to elicit their acts as principles natural and necessary; all the necessity ascribed by them to the efficacy of the operation of the grace of God, respects only the event; they say it is necessary that the good be done, which God works in us by his grace, when he works it in us; but for the manner of its doing, they say, it is wrought suitably to the state and condition of the internal principle whence it is to proceed, and doth so, and of the agents whereby it is wrought, which are free. Neither do they say that good is not wrought by any native and inward principle that is in men, unless they will allow no principle to be native but what is in them by nature; and then indeed they say, that though naturally and physically there is, yet morally and spiritually there is not in them any native principle to that which is spiritually good; seeing in that sense, 'no good thing dwells in men.' But if it may suffice to evince that they work from a native

inward principle, that their wills which are their natural faculties, quickened, improved and heightened, by inward, indwelling habits of grace, properly theirs when bestowed on them, are the principles of all their actings, then they assert them to work no less from a native internal principle than Christ himself did; so that notwithstanding this diversion given in to supply the absence of an answer, the instance as to that alone, wherein the parallel was intended, stands unmoved, and Mr. Goodwin's whole charge of folly and inconsistency on the proceeding of the Holy Ghost falls to the ground, which is the issue of his eighth argument in this case; his last follows.

The last argument which he proposeth sect. 41. and ends his chapter withal, is faint, and as the droppings after a shower, will easily be blown over. He thus proposeth it:

'That doctrine which naturally and directly tendeth to beget and foment jealousies, and evil surmises between brethren in Christ, or such as ought cordially to love, reverence, and honour one another, is not confederate with the gospel, nor from God, and consequently that which contradicteth it must needs be a truth: the common doctrine of unquestionable and unconditional perseverance, is a doctrine of this tendency, apt to beget and foment jealousies, suspicions and evil surmises between brethren, or such as ought to love and respect one the other as brethren in Christ.' *Ergo.*

Ans. Not to take notice of any thing by the by, which sundry expressions and one inference at the least, in this argument do readily administer occasion unto; I await the proof of the minor, which in the following discourse amounts to this: 'that judging all those who fall finally away not to have been true believers, we cannot but have evil surmises, of all that stand, that they are not true believers, seeing as good as they have fallen away; hence jealousies of their hypocrisy will arise.' And he tells us for his part, he knows no Christian in the world, that he hath more reason to judge a true believer, than he had to judge some who are turned wretched apostates. To which I say briefly,

First, I doubt not but Mr. Goodwin knows full well, that this is not a rule given us to make a judgment of believers by, with whom we walk, and towards whom it is required

we bear [a] 'love without dissimulation,' toward such as shew us their faith by their works; our rule of walking from the principle of love and charity is laid down in 1 Cor. xiii. And if all that any man knows at this day professors in this world, should turn apostates, save only one, and he had reckoned that one, and them that are apostatized, before their apostacy, of the same rank of believers, and had no evil thoughts of that one above the rest, he was bound without any evil surmises to believe all things, and to hope all things, and not to let go his sincere love towards that one, embracing of him, delighting in him, holding communion with him to his lives end without suspicion of hypocrisy, or other hard thoughts of him unless he also should degenerate. It is said, John ii. 23. that many believed on Christ because of the profession of faith that they made; and, John vi. 34. they pray earnestly to be fed with the bread of life; so that they were accounted among his disciples, ver. 60. and yet upon a temptation they left our Saviour, and walked no more with him, ver. 66. Now notwithstanding the profession of these men our Saviour plainly says, that they believed not, ver. 64. They falling thus away who had professed to believe, and were accounted as believers, so called and named among the disciples of Christ, and Christ declaring on the account of their apostacy, that indeed they did never believe, how was it that the remaining twelve had not hard thoughts and jealousies one of another (especially considering that there was one hypocrite still left among them), whether they had true faith or no, seeing our Saviour had declared that those who so fell off, as those before-mentioned, had none? Doubtless they were instructed to walk by a better and straighter rule, than that Mr. Goodwin here assigns to believers; let who will or can fall away, whilst we are taught of God to love one another, and are acted by the principle of love which thinks no evil, and do contend against evil surmises as the works of the flesh; there is not any thing in the least attending the discovery of one man's hypocrisy, to work us to a persuasion that another (not in any thing discovered) is so also; that because we see some goodly house fall under storms and temptations to the ground, and so manifest itself to have been built on the

[a] Rom. xii. 18.

sand, that therefore we must conclude that those which stand, are not built upon the rock, is not suited to any principle or rule that our master hath given us to walk by, in order to the exercise of that love, which he calleth for in us towards one another.

Secondly, I say this way of proceeding in our thoughts and judgments doth the Holy Ghost lead us to, 1 John ii. 19. The apostle, giving an account of some who had formerly walked with him in the profession of the faith, and of the fellowship which they had with the Father and Son, fell away from Christ into an opposition against him, so far as to deserve the title of antichrists, having not only forsaken the gospel, but making it also their business to oppose it, and to seduce others from the simplicity of the same; these he informs the scattered believers of the Jews were apostates, having formerly walked with them, but deserted their fellowship, and thereby manifested themselves never to have been true believers, nor ever indeed to have had fellowship with the Father and the Son, no more than they of whom our Saviour spake in the place before-mentioned; and yet doubtless the apostle may not be supposed to lay a foundation for jealousies, evil suspicions, and surmises among believers, though he plainly and evidently affirm that those who fall away were never true believers, and that if they had been so, they would have continued in their faith and fellowship with the people of God. 'They went out from us,' saith he, 'but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would (no doubt) have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.'

A passage, by the way, clearly confirming the main of the doctrine we have hitherto insisted on; and therefore I shall turn aside, before I come to the close of this chapter, having this occasion administered, to vindicate it from the exceptions Mr. Goodwin gives in against the testimony it bears in this case.

The argument that it readily furnisheth us withal, is of this import; 'If all they who fall away totally from the fellowship and society of the church and saints of God, whatever their profession were before that apostacy, were never true believers, and are thereby manifested never to have

been so, then those who are true believers cannot fall away:' but the first is true, therefore the latter; the words are so disposed as to be cast into an hypothetical proposition, which virtually includes a double argument as every discreet axiom doth; it is not thus, therefore thus; if true believers might so depart and apostatize as those here mentioned, no unquestionable proof could be drawn from such apostacy, that men were never true believers, which yet is plainly insisted on, in the text.

Mr. Goodwin, cap. 10. sect. 21—24, pp. 189—192. gathers up sundry exceptions from the remonstrants which (as they also did) he opposeth to this interpretation of the words, and the inferences from them insisted on; I shall briefly consider and remove them in that order as by him they are laid down. He saith,

First, 'This inference presumeth many things, for which neither it, nor any the authors of it, will ever be able to give any good security of proof. As

'First, That this phrase, They were not of us, imports that they were never true believers; this certainly can never be proved, because there is another sense, and this every whit as proper to the words, and more commodious for the context and scope of the place, which may be given of them, as we shall see anon.'

Ans. That there is not any thing presumed for the eduction of the inference proposed, but what is either directly expressed, or evidently included, in the words of the text, will appear in the farther consideration of what Mr. Goodwin hath to offer to the contrary. That expression, They were not of us, imports evidently, that they were not of them, in the fellowship and communion which he was now exhorting believers to continue and abide in. He tells them at the head of this discourse, cap. 1. 3. that the end of his writing to them, was to draw them into, and keep them in communion with himself, and the saints with him; which communion or fellowship, he tells them, 'they had with the Father and the Son.' But as for the persons, of whom in these words he is speaking to them, describing them by their former and present condition, with the causes of it, he tells them, that though they abode with them for a season, yet they were never of them, as to the communion and fel-

lowship they had with the Father and Son, and so were never true members of the church: the only reason Mr. Goodwin gives to invalidate this sense of the words is, that he is able to give another meaning of them (in his own judgment) more proper to the words, and more commodious to the scope of the place: which, whether it have any more efficacy to take in the force and evidence of the interpretation given, lying plain and clear in the first view of the words and context, than it hath to evade the eduction of any truth whatever, from any place of Scripture whatever, seeing some or other suppose themselves able to give another sense of the words, let the reader judge. But he adds,

'Secondly, That this expression, They were of us, signifies that they were true believers is presumed; of the uncertainty of this supposition we shall,' saith he, 'give the like account.'

Ans. When we come to take Mr. Goodwin's farther account, we shall be able (I make no doubt) to reckon with him, and to discharge his bill; in the meantime, we say, that supposition, 'if they had been of us' (whence our inference in made), evidently includes a fellowship and communion with the apostle and true believers in their fellowship with God, which is asserted as a certain foundation of men's abiding in the communion of the saints.

But, says he,

'Thirdly, It is supposed, that these words, They went out from us, signify their final defection, or abdication of the apostle's communion, or their total and final renunciation of Christ, his church, and gospel; this supposition hath no bottom at all, or colour for it.'

Ans. Divide not the words from their coherence, and the intendment of the place, and the signification denied is too evident and clear for any one, with the least colour of reason, to rise up against it; 'they went out,' so out from the communion of the church, as to become antichrists, opposers of Christ, and seducers from him, and certainly in so doing, did totally desert the communion of the apostle, renounce the Lord Christ, as by him preached, and forsook utterly both church and gospel, as to any fellowship with the one or the other: and we know full well, what is the bottom of this and the like assertions, 'that such and such

things have no bottom at all;' which never yet failed Mr. Goodwin at his need.

'Fourthly,' saith he, 'It is supposed that this clause, They would no doubt have continued with us, signifies they would have continued in the same faith, wherein we persevere and continue; nor is there,' saith he, 'any competent reason to enforce this sense of those words, because neither doth the grammatical tenor of them require it, and much less the scope of the passage.'

Ans. The fellowship John invited believers unto, and to continue in (as hath often been observed with him), and the saints with him, was that which they held with the Father and the Son, to continue with them therein, in the literal grammatical sense of the words, is to continue in the faith: it being faith whereby they have that fellowship or communion; this also is evident from the scope of the whole passage, and is here only impotently denied. But, saith he,

'Fifthly, The said inference supposeth that John certainly knew that all those who for the present remained in his communion, were true believers; for, if they were not true believers, they that were gone out from them in the sense contended for, might be said to be of them, that is, persons of the same condition with them; but how improbable this is, I mean that John should infallibly know, that all those who has yet continued with them, were true believers, I refer to consideration.'

Ans. Had Mr. Goodwin a little poised this passage before he took it up, perhaps he would have cast it away, as an useless trifle; but his masters having insisted on it, perhaps he thought it not meet to question their judgments in the least, for fear of being at liberty to deal so with them in matters of greater importance. I say then that there is not the least colour for any such supposal from the inference we make from the text; nor is there any thing of that nature intimated, or suggested in the words, or argument from them; the body of them whom the apostates forsook, were true believers; and their abiding in the fellowship of the saints, was a manifestation of it sufficient for them to be owned as such, which the others manifested themselves never to have been, by their apostacy. 'But, saith he,

'Sixthly, The inference under contest yet farther supposeth, that John certainly knew, that they who were now gone out from them, neither were now, nor ever before, true believers; yea, and that he certainly knew this by their departure or going out from them.'

Ans. This is the very thing that the apostle affirms, that he certainly knew those apostates never to have been true believers, and that by their apostacy, or falling totally from the gospel, becoming seducers and opposers of Christ; let him argue it out with the Holy Ghost, if he can, whose plain and clear expression this is, and that confirmed by the ensuing argument of the perseverance of them who were true believers, and whose fellowship is with the saints, in their communion with the Father and the Son; wherefore, saith he,

'Lastly, It presumeth yet farther, that all true believers do always abide in the external communion of the church; and that when men do not so abide they plainly declare herein, that they never were true believers, which is not only a manifest untruth, but expressly contrary to the doctrine itself of those men who assert the inference; for they teach (as we heard before) that a true believer may fall so foully and so far, that the church, according to the command of Christ, may be constrained to testify that she cannot tolerate them in her external communion, nor that ever they shall have any part or portion in the kingdom of Christ, unless they repent; doubtless to be cast out of the church according to the institution and command of Christ (who commands no such thing but upon very heinous and high unchristian misdemeanours) is of every whit as sad importance, as a voluntary desertion of the churches' communion can be for a season.'

Ans. It supposeth that no true believers fall so off from the church, as to become antichrists, opposers of Christ and the church, so as to deny that Christ is come in the flesh, which was the great business of the antichrists in those days; it is true, and granted by us, that a true believer may forsake the outward communion of some particular church for a season, yea, and that upon his irregular walking and not according to the rule of Christ, he may, by the authority of such a church, be rejected from its communion for his amendment and recovery into the right way, of which be-

fore: but that a true believer can voluntarily desert the communion of the saints, and become an antichrist, that this text denies, and we from it, and the many other witnesses of the same truth, that have been produced: notwithstanding then all Mr. Goodwin's exceptions, there is nothing presumed in the inference, we make from these words, but what is either expressly contained, or evidently included in them.

But Mr. Goodwin will not thus give over; he prefers his exceptions to this testimony in another whole section; which, because the demonstration of the truth in hand from this place, though here handled by the by, is of great importance, and such as by its single strength is sufficient utterly to cast to the ground the figment set up in opposition to it, I shall present entirely to the reader (that our author may be heard out and nothing omitted that he pleads, for the waving of the force of the argument in hand) that whole section. Thus then he proceeds:

'Suppose that these two suppositions be granted to the inference makers; first, that this phrase, To go out from us, signifies voluntarily to forsake the society and communion of Christians; and secondly, that this expression, To be of us, signifies true and inward communion with those from whom they went out, yet will not these contributions suffice, for the firm building of the said inference; the reason is, because the apostle expressly saith, that they would have continued with us; not that they would have continued such as they were, in respect of the truth or essence of their faith; and if the apostle's scope in this place were to prove or affirm that they who are once true Christians, or believers, always continue such; then, when he saith they would have continued with us, he must of necessity mean, either that they would have continued faithful as we continue faithful, or else that they would have continued always in our society, or in the profession of Christianity: but that neither of these senses are of any tolerable consistency, is evident by the light of this consideration; viz. That the apostle then must have known, that the person he speaks of, and who went out from them, neither were nor ever had been true Christian believers, when they went thus from them; now if he had this knowledge of them, it must be supposed either that he had it by

extraordinary revelation (but this is very improbable, and howsoever cannot be proved), or else that he gained and obtained it by their departure or going out from them; but that this could be no sufficient argument or ground to beget any such knowledge in the apostle concerning them, is evident from hence, because it may very easily, and doth very frequently come to pass, that they who are true Christians, do not always continue in the society to which they have joined themselves, no nor yet in the external profession of Christianity itself; yea, our opposers themselves, frequently and without scruple teach, that even true believers themselves, may through fear, or shame, or extremity of sufferings, be brought to deny Christ, and without any danger of being shipwrecked of their faith, forbear making a profession of the name of Christ afterward.'

Ans. First, What is meant and intended by those expressions 'went out from us,' and 'to be of us' hath been declared; we are not to teach the Holy Ghost to speak; whatever conceit we may have of our own abilities, when we deal with worms of the earth like ourselves, to his will, to his expressions, we must vail and submit; he is pleased to phrase their continuance in the faith, their 'continuance with us,' that is, with the saints in the fellowship and communion of the gospel, which they had with God in Christ; the expression is clear and evident to the purpose in hand, and there is no contending against it.

Secondly, We do not say, that it is the direct scope and intent of the apostle in this place, to prove that those who are true believers cannot fall away and depart from the faith, which he afterward doth to the purpose, chap. iii. 9. but his mind and intendment was, to manifest, that those who forsake the society of Christians, and become antichrists and seducers, were indeed never true believers; using the other hypothesis as a medium for the confirmation of this assertion.

Thirdly, By that phrase, they 'would have continued with us,' the apostle intends their continuance in the society and fellowship of the faithful by the profession of Jesus Christ, whom now they opposed, denying him to be come in the flesh; that is, they would not have so fallen off, as they have done, upon the account of the estate and condition of true

believers and real saints, who are kept by the power of God to salvation.

Fourthly, The apostle did know, and professed himself to know, that they were not, nor ever had been true believers, when they were once so gone out from them, as they went; as our Saviour Christ professed them not to have been true believers, who followed him for awhile, were called and accounted his disciples, when they fell in an hour of temptation; neither have we the least reason to suppose, that the apostle had this knowledge by revelation, seeing the thing itself in reference and proportion to the principles he lays down of the continuance of believers, did openly proclaim it.

Fifthly, That true Christians or believers can so fall away from the society of the saints as those here mentioned did, is denied; and a grant of it ought not to be begged at our hands; it is true, that (as was before granted) a true believer may for a season desert the communion or fellowship of a church wherein he hath walked, and that causelessly; yea, he may be surprised through infirmity to deny under mighty temptations, in words for a moment the Lord Christ, whom yet his heart loves and honours, as in the case of Peter was too evident, but that such a one may forsake the external profession of Christianity, or cease profession-making, and betake himself to a contrary interest, opposing Christ and his ways, as those here insisted on did; that is denied, and not the least attempt of proof made to the contrary.

Whilst I was upon consideration of these exceptions of Mr. Goodwin's to our testimony from this text of Scripture by us insisted on, there came to my hands his exposition on the 9th chapter to the Romans; in the epistle whereof to the reader, he is pleased, sect. 6. studiously to wave the imputation of having borrowed this exposition from Arminius and his followers: an apology perhaps unworthy his prudence, and great abilities; which testimony yet I fear, by having cast an eye on the body of the discourse, will scarcely be received by his reader, without the help of that vulgar proverb 'good wits jump:' but yet on that occasion I cannot but say, however he hath dealt in that treatise, this discourse I have under consideration is purely translated from them, the condition of very much of what hath been already

considered, having the same which I had there thought to have manifested, by placing their Latin against his English in the margin: but these things are personal, not belonging to the cause in hand. Mr. G. is sufficiently known to have abilities of his own, such as wherewith he hath done (in sundry particulars) considerable service to the truth, as sometimes they have been unhappily engaged in ways of a contrary nature and tendency.

It being evident from these considerations that our author is not able in the least to take off this witness from speaking home to the very heart of the cause in hand, that it may not seem to be weakened and impaired by him in the least: I shall farther consider that diversion which he would entice the words unto, from their proper channel and intendment, and so leave the apostacy of the saints dead at the foot of it. He gives us then, (sect. 23, 24.) an exposition of this place of Scripture, upon the rack whereof, it seems not to speak what formerly we received from its mouth: for the occasion of the words, he says,

'For the true meaning of this place, it is to be considered that the apostle's intent in the words was to prevent or heal an offence, that weak Christians might take at the doctrine which was taught and spread abroad by those antichrists or antichristian teachers, spoken of in the former verse; and they are said to have been many, and that especially because they had sometimes lived and conversed with the apostles themselves in Christian churches, and had professed the same faith and doctrine with them; by reason hereof some Christians not so considerate or judicious as others, might possibly think or conceive, that surely all things were not well with the apostles, and those Christian societies with which they consorted; there was something not as it ought to have been, either in doctrine or manners, or both, which ministered an occasion to these men to break communion with them, and to leave them.'

Ans. First, The intendment of the apostle in the context, is evidently to caution believers against seducers, acquainting them also with the sweet and gracious provision that God had made for their preservation, in the abiding, teaching, anointing, bestowed, on them: in the verse under present consideration, he gives them a description of the per-

sons that did seduce them, in respect of their present state and condition; they were apostates; who, though they had sometimes made profession of the faith, yet indeed were never true believers, nor had any fellowship with Jesus Christ, as he and the saints had, which also they had abundantly manifested by their open apostacy, and ensuing opposition to the doctrine of the gospel, and the eternal life manifested therein.

Secondly, That any Christians whatsoever, from the consideration of these seducers falling away did entertain any suspicion that all things were not well in that society of which the apostle speaks (not with the apostles which were all dead, himself only excepted, when John wrote this epistle), either as to doctrine or manners, so supposing them to take part with the apostates in their departure, is a surmise whereunto there is not any thing in the least contributed in the text or context, nor any thing like to it, being a mere invention of our author, found out to serve this turn, and confidently without any induction looking that way, or attempt of proof, imposed upon his credulous reader; if men may assume to themselves a liberty of creating occasions of words, discourses, or expressions in the Scripture, no manner of way insinuated nor suggested therein, they may wrest it to what they please, and confirm whatever they have a mind unto.

This false foundation being laid, he proceeds to build upon it, and suitably thereunto feigns the apostle to speak what never entered into his heart, and unto that whereof he had no occasion administered.

'To this,' saith he, 'the apostle answereth partly by concession, partly by exception; first by concession, in those words, They went out from us; which words do not so much import their utter declining or forsaking the apostles' communion, as the advantage or opportunity which they had to gain credit and respect, both to the doctrine and persons among professors of Christianity in the world; inasmuch as they came forth from the apostles themselves as men sent and commissioned by them to teach; the same phrase is used in this sense, and with the same import where the apostles write thus to the brethren of the Gentiles; Acts xv. 24. Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain that went out from

us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, You must be circumcised and keep the law, to whom we gave no such commandment; so that in this clause, They went out from us, the apostle grants; first, That those antichristian teachers had indeed for a time held communion with them; and secondly, That hereby they had the greater opportunity, of doing harm in the world, by their false doctrines. But secondly, He answers farther by way of exception, But they were not of us, whilst yet they conversed with us, they were not men of the same spirit and principles with us; we walked in the profession of the gospel, with single and upright hearts, not aiming at any singular greatness, or worldly accommodations in one kind or other; these men loved this present world, and when they found the simplicity of the gospel would not accommodate them to their minds, they brake with us, and with the truth of the gospel itself at once.'

Ans. First, I suppose it is evident, at the first view, that this new gloss of the apostle's words is inconsistent with that, which was proposed for the occasion of them in the words foregoing; there an aspersion is said to be cast upon the churches and societies whereof the apostle speaks, from the departure of these seducers from them, as though they were not sound in faith or manners; here an insinuation quite of another tendency is suggested, as though these persons found continuance in their teachings and seductions, from the society and communion which they had had with the apostles; as though they had pretended to come from them by commission, and so instead of casting reproach upon them by their departure, did assume authority to themselves, by their having been with them. But to the thing itself I say,

Secondly, That the apostle is not answering any objection, but describing the state and condition of the antichrists and seducers, concerning whom and their seduction he cautioneth believers, hath been formerly beyond contradiction manifested and maintained; that expression, then, 'they went out from us,' is not an answer (by concession) to an objection, but a description of seducers by their apostacy; which words also in their regard to the persons as before by him described, do manifest their utter declining and forsaking

the communion of the saints, they so going from them, as also going into an opposition to the doctrine of the gospel.

Thirdly, That the apostle here insinuates an advantage these antichrists had, to seduce from their former communion with him (a thing not in the least suggested, as was observed, in the occasion of the words, as laid down by Mr. Goodwin himself), is proved from the use of the words, 'they went out from us;' Acts xv. 24. Whence this undeniable argument may be educed. Some who went out from the apostle, had repute and authority in their preaching thereby; these antichrists went out from the apostle, therefore they had repute and authority thereby. Younger men than either Mr. Goodwin or myself, know well enough what to make of this argument; besides, though there be an agreement in that one expression, all the neighbouring parts of the description, manifest that in the things themselves, there and here pointed at, there is no affinity: those in the Acts pretended to abide still in the 'communion and faith of the apostles,' these here expressively departed both from the one and the other, to an opposition of them both: the former seemed to have pretended a commission from the apostles; these, according to Mr. Goodwin himself, did so far declare against them, that it was a scandal to some, fearing that all had not been well among the apostles.

Fourthly, That which is called an answer by way of exception, as in it lies the expression of it so used upon the matter, is as much as we urge from these words; the import of them is said to be, 'they were not of us, though they were with us, yet they were not such as we are, did not walk in that uprightness of heart as we do, they were not men of the same principles, and spirit with us;' that is, they were not true, thorough, sincere, and sound believers at all, no not while they conversed with the apostles. Now evident it is that in those words, as is manifest by the assuming of them again for the use of an inference ensuing, 'for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us,' the apostle yields a reason and account, how they came to apostatize and fall to the opposition of the gospel from the profession wherein they walked; it was because they were not men of thorough and sound principles, true believers; and consequently, he supposeth and implieth, that if they

had been so they would not, they could not, have so apostatized; for if they might, there had been no weight in the account given of the reason of their revolt.

In what follows, that these words, 'but they were not of us, do not necessarily imply they were believers formerly, but perhaps they had been so, and were before fallen away, being choked by the cares of the world;' an observation is insinuated, directly opposite to the apostle's design, and such as makes his whole discourse ridiculous. An account he gives of men's falling away from the faith, and tells them it is because, though they have been professors, yet they were never true believers; yea but perhaps they were true believers, and then fell away, and after that fell away; that is, they fell from the faith, and then fell from the faith; for that is plainly intimated in, and is the sense of this doubty observation.

But to proceed with his exposition; he says, 'It follows, For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; in these words the apostle gives a reason of his exception, telling them to whom he writes that this was a sign and argument that those antichristian teachers, were not of them in the sense declared; viz. That they did not continue with them; that is, they quitted their former intimacy and converse with the apostles, refused to steer the same course, to walk by the same principles, any longer with them, which, saith he, doubtless they would not have done, had they been as sincerely affected towards Jesus Christ and the gospel as we: by which assertion John plainly vindicated himself and the Christian churches of his communion, from giving any just occasion of offence unto those men, whereby they should be any ways induced to forsake them, and resolves their unworthy departure of this kind into their own carnal and corrupt hearts, which lusted after some fleshly accommodations and contentments, that were not to be obtained or enjoyed in a sincere profession of the gospel with the apostles, and those who were perfect of heart with them.'

Ans. First, That no aspersion was cast on John, or the churches of his communion by the apostacy of the antichrists, of whom he speaks, from which he should need to vindicate himself and them, was before declared. There

was not, indeed, nor possibly could be, the least occasion for any surmise of evil concerning them from whom men departed, in turning ungodly opposers of Christ; for any thing that is here offered, it is but an obscuring of the light that breaks forth from the words, for the discerning of the truth in hand; it is granted that the apostle manifests, that they were not of them, that is, true, upright, sound believers, that walked with a right foot in the doctrine of the gospel, because they forsook the communion of the saints, to fall into the condition of antichristianism, wherein they were now engaged. Now if this be an argument that a man was never a true believer, in the highest profession that he makes, because he falls from it and forsakes it, certainly those that are true believers, cannot so fall from their steadfastness; or the argument will be of no evidence or conviction at all; neither is any thing here offered by Mr. Goodwin, but what upon a thorough consideration, doth confirm the inferences we insist upon, and make to the work in hand: truth will at one time or other, lead captive those who are most skilful in their rebellion against it.

What is added, sect. 24., concerning the righteous judgment of God, and the gracious tendency of his dispensations to his church's use, in suffering these wretches so to discover themselves, and be manifested what they were, I oppose not. The discovery that was made, was of what they had been before; that is, not true believers, and not what now they were: yea, by what they now shewed themselves to be, was made manifest what before they were; words of the like import you have, 1 Cor. xi. 19. 'For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you;' as here those who fall away are manifested to be corrupt, so there are those who abide to be sincere.

From what hath been occasionally spoken of the intendment and scope of this place, of the design which the apostle had in hand, of the direct sense of the words themselves, Mr. Goodwin's exceptions to our interpretation of the words and [illegible] from it being wholly removed, and his expo- [illegible] he advanceth in the room of that insisted on, [illegible] be, as to the occasion and scope of the place [illegible] ly foreign unto it, and as to explication of the

particulars of it, not of any strength or consistency for the obscuring of the true sense and meaning of the place, in the eye of an intelligent reader; it is evidently concluded beyond all colourable contradiction, that those who are true believers indeed, having obtained communion with the Father and his Son Christ Jesus, cannot fall into a total relinquishment of Christ, or of the faith of the gospel, so as to have no portion nor interest in the communion they formerly enjoyed.

To return to Mr. Goodwin's close of this 13th chapter, and nine arguments, as he calls them, from which he labours to evince the apostacy of believers, he shuts up the whole with a declamation against, and reviling of the doctrine he opposeth, with many opprobrious and reproachful expressions; calling it an impostor, and an appearance of Satan in the likeness of an angel of light, with such like terms of reproach, as his rhetoric at every turn is ready to furnish him withal; threatening it farther, with calling it in question before I know not how many learned men of all sorts, and to disprove it by their testimony concerning it; and so all that is required for its destruction is, or shall be speedily despatched. God knows how to defend his truth, and as he hath done this in particular, against as fierce assaults as any Mr. Goodwin hath made, or is like to make against it, so I no way doubt he will continue to do. It is not the first time, that it hath been conformable to its author; in undergoing the contradiction of men, and being laden with reproaches, and crucified among the theivish principles of error and profaneness. Hitherto it hath not wanted in due time its resurrection, and that continually with a new glory, and an added estimation to what before it obtained among the saints of God; and I no way doubt, but that it will grow more and more, until the perfect day, when those opinions and inventions of men, derogatory to the grace and covenant of God, his truth, unchangeableness, and faithfulness, which now make long their shades to eclipse the beauty and lustre of it, shall consume and vanish away before its brightness. In which persuasion I doubt not, but the reader will be confirmed with me, upon the farther consideration of what Mr. Goodwin's endeavours are in opposition thereto, wherewith now by the grace of God, contrary to my first intendment, I shall proceed.

CHAP. XVII.

The cause of proceeding in this chapter. Mr. G.'s attempt, chap. 12. *of his book. Of the preface to Mr. G.'s discourse. Whether doctrine renders men proud and presumptuous. Mr. G.'s rule of judging of doctrines called to the rule. Doctrine pretending to promote godliness, how far an argument of the truth. Mr. G.'s pretended advantages in judging of truths examined. The first, of his knowledge of the general course of the Scriptures. Of the experiences of his own heart. And his observations of the ways of others. Of his rational abilities.* Ezek. xviii. 24, 25. *proposed to consideration. Mr. G.'s sense of this place. The words opened; observations for the opening of the text. The words farther weighed; an entrance into the answer to the argument from hence: the word hypothetical not absolute. Mr. G.'s answer proposed and considered. Whether the words are hypothetical. The severals of the text considered; the righteous man spoken of, who. Mr. G.'s proof of his interpretation of a righteous man considered. Dr. Prideaux's sense of the righteous person here intended, considered. Of the commination in the words: shall die. The sense of the words: what death intended. Close of the consideration of the text insisted on.* Matt. xviii. 32, 33. *taken into a review. Whether the love of God be mutable, what the love of God is.* 1 Cor. ix. 27. *In what sense it was possible for Paul to become a reprobate. The proper sense of the place insisted on, manifested. Of the meaning of the word* ἀδόκιμος. *The scope of the place farther cleared.* Heb. vi. 4—6. x. 26, 27. *proposed to consideration: whether the words be conditional. The genuine and true meaning of the place opened, in six observations. Mr. G.'s exceptions to the exposition of the words insisted on, removed. The persons intended not true believers: this evinced on sundry considerations. The particulars of the texts vindicated. Of the illuminations mentioned in the text. Of the acknowledgment of the truth ascribed to the person mentioned. Of the sanctifications mentioned in the texts. Of tasting the heavenly gift. To be made partakers of the Holy Ghost, what. Of tasting the good word of God, and power of the world to come. Of the progress made by man not really regenerate in the things of God. The close of our considerations on these texts.* Heb. x. 38, 39. *Mr. G.'s arguing from thence: considered and answered: of the right translation of the word: Beza vindicated, as also our English translations. The words of the text, effectual to prove the saints' perseverance. Of the parable of the stony ground;* Matt. xiii. 20, 21. *Mr. G.'s arguing from the place proposed and considered. The similitude in the parable farther considered. An argument from the text, to prove the persons described not to be true believers.* 2 Pet. ii. 18—22. *Mr. G.'s arguings from this place considered, &c.*

THOUGH I could willingly be spared the labour of all that must ensue to the end of this treatise, yet it being made ne-

cessary by the endeavours of men not delighting in the truth which hitherto we have asserted, for the opposition thereof, and lying I hope under the power and efficacy of that heavenly exhortation of 'contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,' I shall with all cheerfulness address myself thereunto; yea, the service and homage I owe to the truth itself, causing this engagement for its rescue from under the captivity wherein by the chains of Mr. Goodwin's rhetoric it hath been sometimes detained, being increased and doubled by the pressing and violent wresting of sundry texts of Scripture to serve in the same design of bondaging the truth with him, is a farther incitation to add my weak endeavours, to break open those doors and bars which he hath shut and fastened upon them both, for their joint deliverance.

In Mr. Goodwin's 12th chapter he takes into participation with him, as is pretended, eight places of Scripture, endeavouring by all means possible to compel them to speak comfortable words, for the relief of his fainting and dying cause. Whether he hath prevailed with them to the least compliance, or whether he will not be found to proclaim in their name what they never once acknowledged unto him, will be tried out in the process of our consideration of them.

In the first and second section he fronts the discourse intended with an eloquent oration, partly concerning the tendency of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, which he girds himself now more closely to contend withal, partly concerning himself, his own ability, industry, skill, diligence, and observation of doctrines and persons, with his rules in judging of the one and the other.

For the first, he informs us, that his judgment is, 'that many who might have attained a crown of glory, by a presumptuous conceit of the impossibility of their miscarrying, are now like to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire; men thereby gratifying the flesh, with wresting the Scripture to the encouragement thereof.'

That the proud and presumptuous conceits of men are like to have no other issue or effect than the betraying of their souls to all manner of looseness and abomination, so exposing them to the 'vengeance of eternal fire,' we are well assured; and therefore, 'knowing the terror of the Lord do

persuade men,' what we are able, to cast down all high thoughts and imaginations concerning their own abilities to do good, to believe, to obey the gospel, or to abide in the faith thereof, and to roll themselves freely, fully, wholly, on the free grace and faithfulness of God, in the covenant of mercy, ratified in the blood of his Son, wherein they shall be assured to find peace to their souls. On this foundation do we build all our endeavours, for the exalting the sovereign, free, effectual grace of God, in opposition to the proud and presumptuous conceits of men, concerning their own inbred, native power in spiritual things; an apprehension whereof we are well assured, disposeth the heart into such a frame as God abhors, and prepares the soul to a battle against him, in the highest and most abominable rebellion imaginable. I no ways doubt, that the ways and means whereby innumerable poor creatures have been hardened to their eternal ruin, have had all their springs and fountains lie in this one wretched reserve, of a power in themselves to turn to God, and to abide with him. That any one by mixing the promises of God with faith, wherein the Lord hath graciously assured him, that seeing he hath no strength in himself to continue in his mercy, he will preserve and keep him in and through the Son of his love, hath ever been, or ever can be turned wholly aside to any way or path not acceptable to God, or not ending in everlasting peace, will never be made good whilst the gospel of Christ finds honour and credit amongst any of the sons of men. There may be some indeed, who are strangers to the covenant of promise, whatever they do pretend, who may turn this grace of God in the gospel, as also that of the satisfaction of Christ, redemption by his blood, and justification by faith, the whole doctrine of the covenant of grace in Christ, into lasciviousness; but shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect? shall their wickedness and rebellion, prejudice the mercy, peace, and consolation of the saints? Because the gospel is to them 'the savour of death unto death,' may it not be the 'savour of life unto life' unto them that do embrace it? Whatever then be the disasters (of which themselves are the sole cause) of men with their presumptuous conceits of the impossibility of miscarrying, seeing every presumptuous conceit of what kind soever is a desperate miscarriage, their ruin and destruction

cannot in the least be ascribed to that doctrine which calls for faith in the promises of God, a faith working by love, and decrying all presumptuous conceits whatever. A doctrine without which, and the necessary concomitant doctrines thereof, the whole bottom of men's walking with God, and of their obedience, is nothing but presumption and conceit, whereby setting aside the cold fits they are sometimes cast into, by the checks of their consciences, they spend their days in the distemper of a fever of pride and folly.

In the ensuing discourse, Mr. Goodwin informs us of these two things. First, What rule he proceeds by in judging of the truth of contrary opinions, when (as he phraseth it) the tongue of the Scripture seems to be cloven about them.

And secondly, Of his own advantages and abilities to make a right judgment according to that rule. The rule he attends unto upon the information he hath given us is, 'the consideration of which of the opinions that are at any time rivals for his judgment and acceptation, tend most unto godliness; the gospel being the truth which is according to godliness,' of his own advantages and abilities to make a right judgment according to this rule, there are several heads and springs; as his 'knowledge of the general course of the Scripture, the experience of his own heart, his long observation of the spirits and ways of men, but chiefly that light of reason and understanding which he hath.' And by this rule, with these abilities proceeding in the examination of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, he condemns it and casts it out as an abominable thing, preferring that concerning their final defection far above it. Some considerations I shall add to attend upon his rule and principles.

First, It is most certain, 'that the gospel is a doctrine according unto godliness,' whose immediate and direct tendency, as in the whole frame and course of it, so in every particular branch and stream is to promote that obedience to God in Christ, which we call godliness. This is the will of God revealed therein even our sanctification, and whatever doctrine it be that is suited to turn men off from walking with God in that way of holiness, it carries its brand in its face, whereby every one that finds it, may know that it is of the unclean spirit, the evil one. But yet that there may be fearful and

desperate deceits in the hearts of men judging of truths, pretending their rise and original from the gospel, by their suitableness to the promotion of godliness and holiness, hath been before in part declared, and the experience of all ages doth sufficiently manifest. Among all those who profess the name of Christ more or less in the world, though in and under the most antichristian opposition to him, who is there that doth not pretend that this tendency of opinions unto godliness, or their disserviceableness thereunto, hath a great influence into the guidance of their judgment in the receiving or rejecting of them. On the account of its destructiveness to godliness and obedience do the Socinians reject the satisfaction and merit of Christ; and on the account of conducingness thereunto, do the Papists assert and build up the doctrines of their own merits, penance, satisfaction and the like. On that principle did they seem to be acted, who pressed legal and judicial suppositions with a shew of wisdom or will worship, and humility and neglecting the body; Col. ii. 23. Neither did they fail of their plea concerning promotion of godliness in the worship of God, who reviled, rejected, and persecuted the ordinances of Christ in this generation, to set up their own abominations in the room. Yea, it is generally the first word wherewith every abomination opens its mouth in the world, though the men of those abominations do rather suppose this pretence of godliness to be serviceable for the promotion of their opinions, than their opinions any way really useful to the promotion of godliness. Neither need we go far to inquire after the reasons of men's miscarriages, pretending to judge of truth according to this rule, seeing they lie at hand, and are exposed to the view of all; for besides that very many of the pretenders to this plea may be justly suspected to be men of corrupt minds, dealing falsely and treacherously with their own souls and the truth, the pretence of furthering holiness being one of the cunning sleights wherewith they lie in wait to deceive, which may justly be suspected of them who, together with this plea, and whilst they make it, are apparently themselves loose and remote from the power of a gospel conversation, as the case hath been with not a few of the most eminent assertors of Arminianism, how few are there in the world, who have indeed a true notion and apprehension of the nature of holi-

ness in its whole compass and extent, as in the fountain, causes, rise, and use, and end thereof. And if men know not indeed what holiness is, how shall they judge what doctrine or opinion is conducing to the furtherance thereof, or is obstructive to it? Give me a man who is persuaded that he hath power in himself, being by the discovery of a rule directed thereinto, to yield that obedience to God which he doth require, who supposeth that threats of hell and destruction are the greatest, and most powerful and effectual motive unto that obedience; that the Spirit and grace of God to work and create a new heart in him as a suitable principle of all holy actings, are not purchased nor procured for him by the blood of Christ; nor is there any holiness wrought in him by the almighty efficacy of that Spirit and grace, he having a sufficiency in himself for those things; that there is not a real physical concurrence of the grace of God for the production of every good act whatever; and that he is justified upon the account of any act or part of his obedience, or the whole; and I shall not be much moved or shaken with the judgment of that man, concerning the serviceableness and suitableness of any doctrine or doctrines to the furtherance of godliness and holiness. There are also many different opinions about the nature of godliness, what it is, and wherein it doth consist. I desire to be informed how a man may be directed in his examination of those opinions, supposing him in a strait and exigency of thoughts between them, in considering which of them is best suited to the promotion of godliness. I do not intend in the least to derogate from the certain and undoubted truth of what was premised at the beginning of this discourse; viz. 'That every gospel rule whatever is certainly conducing to the furtherance of gospel obedience in them that receive it in the love and power thereof;' every error being in its utmost activity (especially in corrupting the principles of it) obstructive thereunto; much less do we in any measure decline the trial of the doctrine which I assert, in opposition to the apostacy of the saints, by this touchstone of its usefulness to holiness, having formerly manifested its eminent activity and efficacy in that service, and the utter averseness of its corrival to lend any assistance thereunto. But yet I say, in an inquiry after, and dijudication of truth, whatever I have been or

may be straitened between different persuasions, I have and shall rather close, in the practice of holiness, in prayer, faith, and waiting upon God; to search the Scripture, to attend wholly to that rule, having plentiful promises for guidance and direction, than to weigh in any rational consideration of my own, what is conducing to holiness, what not; especially in many truths which have their usefulness in this service, as is the case of most gospel ordinances and institutions of worship, not from the connexion of things, but the mere will of the appointer. Of those doctrines, I confess, which following on to know the Lord, we know from his word to be from him, and in which doing the will of Christ are revealed to us to be his will, a peculiar valuation is to be set on the head of them which appear to be peculiarly and eminently serviceable to the promotion and furthering our obedience; as also, that all opinions whatever, that are in the least seducers from the power, truth, and spirituality of obedience are not of God, and are *eo nomine* to be rejected; yet, having a more sure rule to attend unto, I dare not make my apprehensions concerning the tendency of doctrines any rule, if God hath not so spoken of them for the judging of their truth or falsehood; if my thoughts are not shut up and determined by the power of the word.

The next proposal made by Mr. Goodwin, is of the advantages he hath to judge of truths, which he hath done unto plenary satisfaction, according to the rule now considered. The first thing he offereth to induce us to close with him in his judgment of opinions is, 'the knowledge he hath of the general course of the Scripture;' what is intended by 'the general course of the Scripture,' well I know not; and so am not able to judge of Mr. Goodwin's knowledge thereof by any thing exposed to public view. If by 'the general course of the Scriptures,' the matter of them is intended, the importance of the expression seems to be coincident with the analogy or proportion of faith, a safe rule of prophecy; but whatever Mr. Goodwin's knowledge may be of this, I am not perfectly satisfied that he hath kept close unto it in many doctrines of his book entitled 'Redemption Redeemed;' and so the weight of his skill in judging of truths on this foundation, will not balance what I have to lay against it, for the inducement of other thoughts, than those of closing

with him. The 'course of the Scripture,' cannot import the manner of the expressions therein used: in that there is so great and so much variety therein, that it can scarce be cast into one course and current: and if the general scope, aim, and tendency of the Scripture may pass for the course of it, there is not any one thing that lies so evident and clear therein, as the decrying of all that ability and strength, and power to do good in men, which Mr. Goodwin so much pleads for, and asserts to be in them; with an exaltation of that rich and free grace in the efficacy and the power of it, which he so much opposeth.

The 'experimental knowledge he hath of his own heart, the workings and reasonings thereof;' a thing common to him with others, and what advantages he hath thereby I shall not consider. Only this I shall dare to say, that I would not for all the world, have no experience in my heart of the truth of many things which Mr. Goodwin in this treatise opposeth; or that my weak experience of the grace of God, should not rise above that frame of heart and spirit, which the teachings of it seem to discover. I doubt a person under the covenant of works, heightened with convictions, and a low or common work of the Spirit, induced thereby to some regular walking before God, may reach the utmost of what in this treatise is required to render a man a saint, truly gracious, regenerate, and a believer. And in this also I doubt not, lies the deceit of what is thirdly insisted on, viz. 'His observation of the ways and spirits of men, their firstings and lastings in religion.' A sort of men there are in the world, who escape the outward pollution of it, and are clean in their own eyes, though they are never washed from their iniquities, who having been under strong convictions by the power of the law, and broken thereby from the course of their sin, attending to the word of the gospel with a temporary faith, do go forth unto a profession of religion, and walking with God so far as to have all the lineaments of true believers, as Mr. Goodwin somewhere speaks, drawn in their faces, hearing the word gladly as did Herod, receiving it with joy as did the stony ground, attending to it with delight, as they did in Ezek. xxxiii. 31. Repenting of former sins, as Ahab and Judas, until they are reckoned among true believers, as was Judas and those John ii. 23. who yet were

never united unto Jesus Christ, of whose ways and walking Mr. Goodwin seems to have made observation, and found many of them to end in visible apostacy. But that this observation of them, should cause him to judge them when apostatized to have been true believers, or that he is thereby advantaged to determine concerning the truth of several opinions pretending to his acceptance, I cannot grant, nor doth he go about to prove.

For what he mentions in the last place, of the 'light of reason and understanding' which he hath, I do not only grant him to have it in common, as he saith, with other men, for the kind of it, but also as to the degrees of it to be much advanced therein, above the generality of men; yet I must needs tell him in the close, that all these helps and advantages, seeming to be drawn forth and advanced in opposition to that one great assistance which we enjoy by promise of Christ, of his Spirit leading us into all truth, and teaching us from God by his own anointing, are to me hay and stubble, yea, loss and dung, of no value nor esteem. Had we not other ways and means, helps and advantages to come to the knowledge of the truth, than these here unfolded and spread by Mr. Goodwin, *actum esset*, we should never perceive the things that are of God. The fox was acquainted with many wiles and devices; the cat knew *unum magnum* wherein she found safety. Attendance to the word, according to the direction of the usual known rules and helps agreed on for the interpretation of it, with humble dependance on God, waiting for the guidance of his Spirit according to the promise of his dear Son; asking him of him continually that he may dwell with us, anoint and lead us into all truth, with an utter abrenunciation of all our skill, abilities, wisdom and any resting on them, knowing that it is God alone that gives us understanding, is the course that hitherto hath been used in our inquiry after the mind of God in the doctrine under consideration, and which the Lord assisting shall be heeded and kept close unto, in that discussion of the texts of Scripture wrested by Mr. Goodwin, as by others before him, to give countenance to his opposition to the truth hitherto uttered, confirmed and vindicated from his contradictions thereunto.

The place of Scripture first insisted on, and on the ac-

[redacted] thereof he triumphs with the greatest confidence of [redacted]s, is that of Ezek. xviii. 24, 25. Unto which words [redacted] subjoins a triumphant exulting exclamation.

'What more,' saith he, 'can the understanding, judgment, soul, and conscience of a man, reasonably desire for the establishment in any truth whatsoever, than is delivered by God himself in this passage, to evince the possibility of a righteous man's declining from his righteousness, and that unto death.'

The counsel given of old to the king, may not be unseasonable to Mr. Goodwin in that dominion which he exerciseth in his own thoughts in this work of his, 'let not him that putteth on his armour boast like him that putteth it off.' You have but newly entered the lists; and that with all pressed soldiers, unwilling so much as once to appear in that service they are forced to. If you will but suspend your triumph, until we have made a little trial of your forces, and your skill in managing of them to the battle, perhaps you may be a little taken off from this confidence of success, notwithstanding the facing of this Scripture upon the truth, being cut off and taken away from that coherence and connexion, and station wherein it is placed of God (which is not at the least inquired into), it will be found in that issue to bear it no ill will at all. As will also be manifested by the light of the ensuing consideration.

1. The matter under inquiry, and into a disquisition of whose state we have hitherto been engaged, is the condition of the saints of God; and his dealing with them, in and under the covenant of grace in general. For our guidance and direction herein, a text of Scripture evincing the righteousness of God's dealings with a number of persons in a peculiar case, which was under debate, is produced, and by the tenor of this, and according to the tenor of the reasonings therein, must all the promises of God, in the covenant of grace, made and ratified by the blood of Christ, be regulated and interpreted. We have been told by as learned a man as Mr. Goodwin, that promises made to the people of the Jews peculiarly, and suited to the peculiar state and condition wherein they were, do not concern the people of God in general. And why may not the same be the condi-

tion of threatenings given out upon a parallel account; 'Compedes quas fecit ipse ut ferat æquum est.'

2. That it is the determination and stating of a particular controversy, between God and the people of the Jews, suited to a peculiar dispensation of his providence towards them which is here proposed, is evident from the occasion of the words laid down, ver. 2, 3. 'What mean ye &c. that use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live saith the Lord,' &c. It is the use of a proverb concerning the land of Israel, that God is descrying and disproving the truth of the proverb itself under consideration, and that this should be the standard and rule of God's proceeding with his people, in the covenant of mercy, no man that seems to have either understanding, judgment or conscience can reasonably imagine.

3. That it is not the nature and tenor of the covenant of grace, and God's dealing with his chosen secret ones, his saints, true believers, as to their eternal condition, which in these words is intended, but the manifestation of the righteousness of God in dealing with that people of the Jews, in a peculiar dispensation of his providence, towards the body of that people, and the nation in general, appears farther from the occasion of the words, and the provocation given the Lord to make use of these expressions unto them. The proverb that God cuts out of their lips and mouths, by the sword of his righteousness in these words, was concerning the land of Israel: used perhaps mostly by them in captivity: but it was concerning the land of Israel, not concerning the eternal state and condition of the saints of God, but concerning the land of Israel, ver. 2. God had of old given that land to that people by promise, and continued them in it for many generations; until at length for their wickedness, idolatry, abomination, and obstinacy in their evil ways, he caused them to be carried captive unto Babylon. In that captivity the Lord revenged upon them not only the sins of the present generation, but as he told them, also those of their forefathers; especially the abomination, cruelty, idola-

exercised in the days of Manasseh, taking this season his work of vengeance in the generations following, who

also so far walked in the steps of their forefathers, as to justify all God's proceedings against them. Being wasted and removed from their own land by the righteous judgment of God, they considered the land of Israel that was promised to them (though upon their good behaviour therein), and how instead of a plentiful enjoyment of all things in peace and quietness therein, there were now a small remnant in captivity, the rest, the far greatest part, being destroyed by the sword and famine in that land. In this state and condition, being as all other of their frame and principle, prone to justify themselves, they had hatched a proverb among themselves concerning the land of Israel promised to them, exceedingly opprobrious and reproachful to the justice of God, in his dealings with them. The sum of the intendment of this saying that was grown rife amongst them, was, that for the sin of their forefathers, many, yea the greatest part of them were slain in the land of Israel, and the rest carried from it into bondage and captivity. To vindicate the righteousness and equity of his ways, the impartiality of his judgments, the Lord recounts to them by his prophet many of their sins, whereof themselves with their fathers were guilty, in the land of their nativity, and for which he had brought all that calamity and desolation upon them, whereof they did complain: affirming under many supposals of rising and falling, that principle of rising and falling, that principle he laid down in the entrance of his dealings with them, that every one of them suffered for his own iniquity, whatever they suffered, whether death or other banishment, and not for the sins of their forefathers; whatever influence they might have upon the procuring of the general vengeance, that overtook the whole nation in the midst of their iniquity. This being the aim, scope, and tendency of the place, the import of the words and tenor of God's intendment in them, I cannot but wonder how any man of understanding and conscience can once imagine that God hath given any testimony to the possibility of falling out of covenant with him, of those whom he hath taken nigh to himself through the blood of his Son, in the everlasting bond thereof. As though it were any thing of his dealing with the saints, in reference to their spiritual and eternal condition, that the Lord here reveals his will about; being only the tenor of his dealings

with the house of Israel in reference to the land of Canaan.

4. This is farther manifest in that principle and rule of God's proceedings in the matter laid down, ver. 4. which is not only a line from, but also directly opposite unto, that which is the principle in the covenant of grace. 'The soul that sinneth he shall die.' That soul and person and not another, when in that covenant of grace, he 'sets forth his Son to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, giving him up to death for all, causing the just to die for the unjust,' the soul that never sinned for the souls that had sinned, that they might go free. And I would fain know on what solid grounds an answer may be given to the Socinians triumphing in the 4th verse, against the satisfaction of Christ, no less than Mr. Goodwin, in the 24, 25. against the perseverance of the saints, if you do not manifest the whole tendency of this place to be acommodated to God's providential dispensation of temporal judgments and mercies in respect of that people, and the covenant whereby they held the land of Canaan; and not at all to respect the general dispensation of his righteousness and grace in the blood of Christ. So that,

5. The whole purport and intendment of the Scripture under consideration is only to manifest the tenor of God's righteous proceeding with the people of Israel, in respect of his dispensation towards them in reference to the land of Canaan; convincing them of their own abominations, confuting the profane proverb invented and reared up in the reproach of his righteousness, beating them from the vain pretence of being punished for their fathers sins, and the conceit of their own righteousness, which that people was perpetually puffed up withal; he lets them know that his dealing with them, and his ways towards them, were equal and righteous, in that there was none of them but was punished for his own sin; and though some of them might have made some profession and done some good, yet upon the whole matter first or last, they had all declined, and therefore ought to own the punishment of their sins; God dealing severely, and unto death and destruction, with none but those who either wholly or upon the sum of the matter, turned away from his judgments and statutes. So that,

6. This being the tenor and importance of the words insisted on, this their tendency, aim, and accommodation to the objection levied against the righteousness of God in dealing with that people, this their rise and end, their spring and fall, it is evident beyond all contradiction from any thing but prejudice itself, that all the inquiries and disputes about them, as whether the declaration of the mind of God in them be hypothetical or absolute; what is meant by the righteous person, what by his turning away, and what by the death threatened (all which expressions of the text are in themselves ambiguous, and must be limited from the circumstances of place), are altogether useless and needless, the words utterly refusing any accommodation to the business of our present debate. So that,

7. This dependance of the words, scope of the context, design of the place, and intendment of God in it, the accommodation of the whole discourse to the removal of the objection, and disproving of the proverbial self justification of a sinful people, the only directories in the investigation of the true, proper, native, genuine sense and meaning of them, eyed, weighed, nor considered by Mr. Goodwin, who knew how much it was to his advantage to rend away these two verses from the body of the prophet's discourse, I might well supersede any farther proceedings in the examination of what he has prepared for a reply to the answers commonly given to the argument taken from this place; yet that all security imaginable may be given to the reader, of the inoffensiveness of this place as to the truth we maintain, I shall briefly manifest that Mr. Goodwin hath not indeed effectually taken up and off, any one answer, or any one parcel of any such, that hath usually been given by our divines unto the objection against the doctrine of perseverance hence levied.

That which naturally first offers itself, to our consideration is, the form and tenor of the expression here used; which is not of an absolute nature, but hypothetical. The import of the words is, 'If a righteous man turn from his righteousness and continue therein he shall die.' True, say they who make use of this consideration, God here proposes the desert of sin, and the connexion that is by his appointment, between apostacy and the punishment thereunto

allotted; but this not at all infers that any one who is truly righteous, shall or may everlastingly so apostatize. Such comminations as these God maketh use of to caution believers of the evil of apostacy, and thereby to preserve them from it, as their tendency to that end, by the appointment of God, and their efficacy thereunto, hath been declared. So that to say, because God says, 'If a righteous man turn from his righteousness he shall die;' the whole emphasis lying in the connexion, that is between such turning away, and dying, to conclude (considering what is the proper use and intendment of such threatenings) that a man truly righteous may so fall away, is to build up that which the text contributes not any thing to in the least.

Against this plea Mr. Goodwin riseth up with much contempt and indignation; chap. 12. sect. 9. in these words:

'But this sanctuary hath also been profaned by some of the chief guardians themselves of that cause, for the protection and safety whereof it was built. There needs no more be done (though much more might be done, yea and hath been done by others) than that learned doctor (so lately named), hath done himself for the demolishing of it. Having propounded the argument from the place in Ezekiel according to the import of the interpretation asserted by us; Some saith he, answer that a condition proves nothing in being; which how true soever it may be in respect of such hypotheticals, which are made use of only for the amplification of matters, and serve for the aggravating either of the difficulty or indignity of a thing; (as if I should climb up into heaven thou art there, Psal. cxxxix. it were ridiculous to infer, therefore a man may climb up into heaven;) yet such conditional sayings, upon which admonitions, promises, or threatenings are built, do at least suppose something in possibility, however by virtue of their tenor and form, they suppose nothing in being. For no man seriously intending to encourage a student in his way would speak thus to him; If thou wilt get all the books in the University Library by heart, thou shalt be doctor this commencement. Beside in the case in hand, he that had a mind to deride the prophet, might readily come upon him thus: but a righteous man according to the judgment of those that are orthodox, cannot

turn away from his righteousness; therefore your threatening is in vain. Thus we see to how little purpose it is to seek for starting holes in such logic quirks as these. Thus far the great assertor of the Synod of Dort, and the cause which they maintained to shew the vanity of such a sense or construction, put upon the words now in debate, which shall render them merely conditional, and will not allow them to import so much as a possibility of any thing contained or expressed in them.'

Ans. 1. Doctor Prideaux's choosing not to lay the weight of this answer, to the argument of the Arminians from this place, on the hypothetical manner of the expression used therein, is called a 'defiling the sanctuary by the guardians of the cause whose protection it undertakes. Crimina rasis, librat in antithesis; doctas posuisse figuras laudatur?' What are my thoughts of it, I need not express, being unconcerned in the business, as knowing it not at all needful to be insisted on, for the purpose for which it is produced, the text looking not at all towards the doctrines under consideration; yet I must needs say, I am not satisfied with the doctor's attempt for the removal of it, nor with what is farther added by the remonstrants, in the place which we are sent unto by Mr. Goodwin's marginal directions, though it should be granted, that such conditional expressions do suppose, or may (for that they always do is not affirmed, and in some cases it is evident they do not) that there is something in *posse*, as the doctor speaks, whereunto they do relate, yet they do not infer, that the possibility may by no means be hindered from ever being reduced into act. We grant a possibility of desertion in believers, in respect of their own principles of operation, which is ground sufficient for to give occasion to such hypothetical expressions, as contain comminations and threatenings in them, but yet notwithstanding that possibility on that account supposed, yet the bringing forth of [illegible] an actual accomplishment, may not be [illegible] by the Spirit and grace of God, the [illegible] I say is ground sufficient for [illegible] us, that in respect of them to [illegible] be to incur the thing threatned; which yet upon other [illegible] who says, if the 'righ-

the covenant of grace, and the covenant of the land of Israel, which yet are eminently distinguished in the very foundation of them: the one being built upon this bottom, 'the soul that sinneth it shall die;' the other upon a dispensation of another import, as has been declared: we do then plainly supererogate as to the cause in hand, by the confutation of the answers, which Mr. Goodwin farther attempts to remove, and his endeavour therein, which yet shall not be declined.

Sect. 8. One opposition by some insisted on, of this term a righteous man, is thus proposed by Mr. Goodwin: 'notwithstanding some formerly (it seems) in favour of the doctrine, attempted an escape from that sword of Ezekiel lately drawn against it, by pretending that by the righteous man mentioned in the passages in hand, is not meant a person truly and really righteous, but a kind of formal hypocrite, or outside professor of righteousness.'

Those who insist on this interpretation of the place, tell you that in the commands of God, there is the mere end of them considerable, and the manner of their performance, which is as the life and form of the obedience of them which is acceptable to God. Farther, that many persons wrought upon by the power of conviction from the law of God, and enabled in some measure with common gifts and graces, do go forth in such a way to the performance of the command of God, as to the substance and matter of them (wherein also they are not hypocritical in the strict sense of the word, but sincere), and so are called and counted righteous, comparatively so, in respect of those who live in open rebellion against the Lord and his ways: and such as these they say, as they are oftentimes useful in their generations, and bring glory to God by their profession, so (especially under the old legal dispensation of the covenant) they were rewarded in a plentiful manner of God in this life, in the enjoyment of the abundance of all things in peace and quietness. Of this sort of men, that is men upright and righteous in their dealings with men, and in the world, conscientious in their trust, yielding professed subjection to the judgments and institutions of God, performing outwardly all known duties of religious men, they say, that after they have made a profession of some good continuance, having never attained union with God in Christ, nor being built on the rock, many do

fall into all manner of spiritual and sensual abominations, exposing themselves to all the judgments and vengeance of God in this life, which also under the Old Testament generally overtook them, God being (as here he pleads) righteous therein: in this description of the righteous person here intended, there is no occasion in the least administered to Mr. Goodwin to relieve himself against it, by that which in the close of this section he borrows from Dr. Prideaux, viz. 'That if the righteous man, should turn himself away from his counterfeit and hypocritical righteousness, he should rather live than die:' for they say not that this righteousness is hypocritical or counterfeit, but true and sincere in its kind; only the person himself is supposed not to be partaker of the righteousness of God in Christ, and a principle of life from him, which should alter his obedience, render it spiritual and acceptable to God in the Son of his love.

What more says Mr. Goodwin unto this exposition of the words? With many scornful expressions cast both upon it (as by himself stated and laid down) and the synod of Dort, he tells you it was rejected by the synod. That some in the synod looking on it perhaps under such sense and apprehension as Mr. G. proposeth it in, did not see cause to close with it, may be true. Yet that it was rejected by the synod, Mr. Goodwin can by no means prove, whatever he is pleased to say and to insult thereon, upon the judgments of very learned men, whom he hath no reason upon any account in the world to despise. The labours of very many of them praising them in the gates of Sion, exceedingly above the cry and clamour of all reproaches whatever mustered to their dishonour. But to let pass those poor contemptible wretches, let us see how this master in our Israel, in his indignation deals with this silly shift, whereby poor men strive to avoid his fury. Says he then,

'And indeed the whole series and carriage of the context, from ver. 20. to the end of the chapter, demonstratively evinceth, that by the righteous man all along, is meant such a man as was or is truly righteous; and who, had he persevered in that way of righteousness, wherein he sometimes walked, should have worn the crown of righteousness, and received the reward of a righteous man. As by the wicked

man all along opposed to him, is meant not a person seemingly wicked, but truly and really so (as is acknowledged on all hands), so that the antithesis or opposition between the righteous and the wicked, running so visibly quite through the body of the discourse, must needs be dissolved, if by the righteous man should be meant, a person seemingly righteous only; he that is righteous in this sense being truly and really wicked.'

Ans. The main series and context of the chapter, without the least endeavour to give any light or illustration thereunto, by the scope, occasion, or dependance of the parts of it one upon another, does more than once stand Mr. Goodwin in stead, when nothing else presents itself to his relief. It is true the whole context of the chapter, grants the persons spoken of to be righteous in the performance of the duties mentioned in the chapter, in opposition to the wicked man and his intentions and ways described therein, in proportion to the dispensation of the covenant, whose rule and principle is placed in the head of ver. 20. which Mr. Goodwin directs us unto; viz. 'the soul that sinneth it shall die;' and as there is nothing in all this contrary to any thing in this exposition by Mr. Goodwin opposed, so there is not any thing more proved, nor once attempted to be here by Mr. Goodwin himself, than what is confessed therein.

It is acknowledged that the person spoken of is truly and really righteous, with that kind of righteousness which is intended, and wherein if he continued he was to receive the reward of righteousness then under consideration; and yet, though such a one might be truly and really united unto Christ, yet there is nothing in the text nor context, enforcing that such a one and none else is intended here; and more in this case Mr. Goodwin hath not to add; nor doth he threaten us with any more than he hath delivered, as he did upon the consideration of the tenor of the words, and our inquiry whether they are of an hypothetical or absolute nature and importance.

It is true he adds, that 'Calvin in his exposition on the place, notwithstanding his wariness to manage it so, as that the doctrine of perseverance which he maintained, might suffer no damage (which perhaps Mr. G. was not so wary in

expressing, contending so much as he does, to manifest, that he had thoughts lying another way), and therefore, asserting the person here spoken of, to be a person seemingly righteous only, yet lets fall such things as declared nothing to be wanting in this righteous person but perseverance.' But that Calvin grants in any expression of his, this person or him concerned herein, to be in such an estate as to want nothing but perseverance, to render them everlastingly blessed, is notoriously false; neither does any thing in the expressions cited by Mr. Goodwin come from the body of his discourse, in the least look that way, as might easily be manifested, did I judge it meet in a contest of this nature, to trade in the authorities of men; so that I cannot but wonder with what confidence he is pleased to impose such a sense upon his words; all this while then, notwithstanding any thing our author hath to say to the contrary, the righteous person here intended may be only such a one as was described in the entrance of this consideration of his; and that it is not requisite from the text or context that he should be any other, is more evident than that it is to be contended against.

Sect. 7. He deals with another exposition of the words, which hath no small countenance given unto it from the Scriptures, which for to prevail himself upon an expression or two, by the by, he sets down in the words of Dr. Prideaux, Lect. 6. and they are these. 'There is,' saith he, 'a double righteousness, one inherent, or of works, by which we are sanctified; another, imputed, or of faith, whereby we are justified; a righteous man may turn aside from his own righteousness; viz. from his holiness, and fall into very heinous sins; but it doth not follow from hence, that therefore he hath wholly shaken off from him (or out of him), the righteousness of Christ.' To this he adorns a threefold reply:

1. 'The doctor here presents us with a piece of new divinity, in making sanctification and justification, no more intimate friends, than that one can live without the company and presence of the other. Doubtless if a man's justification may stay behind when his holiness is departed, that assertion of the apostle will hardly stand; without holiness no man shall see the Lord; Heb. xii. 14. And if they that

are Christ's (i. e. who believe in Christ, and thereby are justified), have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, (another assertion of the same apostle), how their relation unto Christ should stand, and yet their holiness sink and fall, I understand not. But I leave his friends to be his enemies in this.'

Ans. How little advantage Mr. Goodwin hath obtained by attempting a diversion from the consideration of the matter insisted on (which is all he doth in this paragraph) will quickly appear. From the righteousness of sanctification there is, or may be supposed, a twofold fall. First, from the exercises of it, in all or any of the fruits thereof, according to the will of God. Secondly, From the habit and principle of it, in respect of its root and groundwork in the soul; it is the former that the doctor asserts. A man, saith he, may fall away from the zealous practice of the duties of holiness, and with, or under violence of temptation (as to fruit-bearing) decay in close walking, until the whole seem really to die, so as through the righteous judgment of God, to be exposed to calamities, corrections, and punishments in this life, yea, the great death itself, as it fell out in the case of Josiah, who fell by the sword in undertaking against the mind and will of God: but now for the work and principles of holiness, none who have once received it, can ever cast it up, and become wholly without; and between this and the righteousness of justification, there is that strict connexion, that the one cannot, doth not consist without the other. If now Mr. Goodwin understands not, how a justified, sanctified person, may decline from the ways and pretences of holiness for a season, so as to provoke the Lord to deal sharply, yea, and sometimes terribly with him, take vengeance of his invention, and yet that person not lose his relation to Christ, nor his interest in the love and favour of God, I shall not presume to instruct him in the knowledge thereof. But refer him to them who are better able so to do, wherein upon the account of his aptness to hear as well as teach, I presume their undertakings will not be difficult. He adds,

2. 'He seems by his word, *penitus*, wholly, throughly, or together, to be singular also in another strain of divinity, to teach *magis* and *minus* in justification. For in saying

that from a man's apostatizing from his own righteousness, it doth not follow that therefore he hath wholly or altogether shaken off the imputed righteousness of Christ; doth he not imply, that a man may shake off some part of the righteousness of Christ from him, and yet keep another part of it upon him? Or else that by sinning, he may come to wear the entire garment or clothing of it so loosely, that it will be ready to drop or fall off from him every hour? And consequently that the righteousness of Christ sits faster and closer upon some than upon others; yea, upon the same person at one time than another.'

Ans. That this is a second attempt, for to lead the reader off from the consideration of the business in hand, and to prepare him by a diversion, to an acceptation of what he afterward tenders in way of reply, that he may not perceive how insufficient it is for the purpose, by an immediate comparing of it with the answer itself, is evident. Truly, when in my younger days, I was wont to hear that doctor in his lectures and other exercises, I did not think then I should have afterward found him called in question for want of skill to express himself and the sense of his mind in Latin, he having a readiness and dexterity in that language equal to any that ever I knew; neither yet am I convinced that his word *penitus*, upon which Mr. Goodwin criticiseth (being commonly, as might be by innumerable instances be made good, used to increase and make emphatical the import of the word wherewith it is associated) will evince any such meaning in his expression, as is there intended by Mr. Goodwin. Justification is, and it was so taught by the doctor, to be (Lect. de Just.) in respect of all persons that are partakers of it equal; and equal to every person so partaking of it, at all times; though in regard of sense and perception, and the peace and comfort, wherewith (when perceived, and felt) it is attended, it is no less subject to increases and wanings than sanctification itself. So that this also might be intended by the doctor without the least strain of new divinity, that justified and sanctified persons, though they might so decline from the course of close walking with God, as for a season to be like a tree in winter, whose substance is in his roots, his leaves and fruit falling off, ceasing to bring forth the fruits of holiness in such de-

grees as formerly, and so lose their sense of acceptation with God through Christ, and the peace, with consolation and joy wherewith it is attended, yet they could not, nor should not, wholly be cast out of the favour of God; the nature and essence of their justification being abiding. And what singular strain of divinity there is in the tendency of such a discourse I know not. Besides, that teaching of *magis* and *minus* in justification should be any singular thing in Mr. Goodwin, I do not well understand; for if the matter of our righteousness, or that upon the imputation whereof unto us, we are justified, may have its degrees, and receive *magis* and *minus*, as certainly our faith may and doth; why our justification may not do so too, I see no reason. But he comes at length to the matter, and addeth,

3. 'Lastly, Were it granted unto the doctor, that from a man's turning aside from his own holiness, it doth not follow that therefore he hath wholly divested himself of the righteousness of Christ imputed; yet from God's determination, or pronouncing a man to be in an estate of condemnation, and of death, it follows roundly, that therefore he is divested of the righteousness of Christ imputed (if ever he were invested with it before), because no man with that righteousness upon him, can be in such an estate. Now we have upon several grounds proved, that the righteous man under that apostacy wherein Ezekiel describes and presents him, is pronounced by God, a child, not of a temporal, but eternal death and condemnation; this, indeed, the doctor denies, but gives no reason of his denial, for which I blame him not. Only I must crave leave to say, that the chair weigheth not so much as one good argument with me; much less, as many. So that all this while, he that spake, and still speaks unto the world by Ezekiel, is no friend to that doctrine which denieth a possibility of a righteous man's declining even unto death.'

Ans. If this be all that Mr. Goodwin hath to say for the removal of this answer, that cuts the throat of his argument if it be not removed, he hath little reason for the confidence wherewith he closeth it, concerning God's speaking in this place of Ezekiel, against that doctrine which in innumerable places of his word he hath taught us, as a doctrine enwrapping no small portion of that grace, which in a covenant

of mercy he dispenseth to his chosen, redeemed, justified, sanctified ones: neither is here any need to add the weight of the chair (wherein yet that person spoke of behaved himself worthily in his generation, and was in his exercises herein, by no means by Mr. Goodwin to be despised) be laid upon the reasonings of the doctor in this case, they proving singly of themselves too heavy for Mr. Goodwin to bear. In brief, that the substance of the reply in hand is merely a begging of the thing in question, any one that hath but half an eye in the business of this nature, may easily discern; that it is supposed that a man truly righteous and justified in the blood of Christ, may so fall away as to be pronounced of God to be in a state of damnation, and so fallen really from his former condition, (Rom. viii. 1.) is the thing that Mr. Goodwin hath to prove. Now, saith he, this must needs be so, because God here upon such a supposal, pronounceth such a man to be in the estate of condemnation; what this is with other men, I know not; but to me, it is no proof at all; nor should I believe that to be the sense of the place, though in variety of expressions he should significantly affirm it a thousand times. The reader also is misinformed, that the doctor attempts not any proof, that by death, eternal death is not in this place intended; he that shall consult the place will find himself abused; but we must speak more of this anon.

And this is all our author offers as to the persons spoken of in the place of Scripture under consideration; wherein, though he hath taken some pains to little or no purpose, to take off the exposition of the words, and the description of the person given by others, yet he hath not attempted to give so much as one argument to confirm the sense he would impose on us concerning the condition of the person spoken of; and I must crave leave to say, that naked assertions, be they never so many, in the chair or out, weigh not so much with me, as one good argument, much less as many.

There is nothing remains to consideration, but only the comminatory part of the words, or the expression of the punishment allotted of God, to such as walk in the ways of apostacy here expressed, 'in his tresspass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he

die;' that is, he shall be dealt withal, as many of their nation were in the land of Israel; my judgments shall overtake him; it shall not advantage him, that either he had godly parents that have walked with me, or that he himself had so behaved himself in a way of righteousness, as before described, if he turn to the profaneness and abominations which are laid down as the ways of wicked men, or into any paths like them, he shall even die, or be punished for his sins, according to the tenor of the truth laid down in the entrance of the chapter, and repeated again ver. 20. 'the soul that sinneth it shall die.' But now whereas it might be replied, that such a one, notwithstanding his degeneracy, might yet perhaps recover himself to his former way of walking, obedience, and righteousness in conversation; and is there then no hope, nor help for him, but having once so apostatized, he must suffer for it? To prevent any such misprision of the mind of God, there is added the terms of his duration in that state of apostacy, that is even unto death; if he committeth iniquity, and dieth in it, that is, repents not of it, before his death, the judgments of God shall find him out, as was before expressed. If by his repentance, he prevent not his calamities, he shall end his sinning in destruction; in which expressions of the person's continuance in his apostatized condition, and of the judgments of God falling on him on that account, there is not the least appearance of any tautology or incongruity in the sense; the same word is used to express diverse concernments of it, which is no tautology; though the same word be used, yet the same thing is not intended; tautology reflects on things, not words; otherwise there must be a tautology wherever there is an *ἀνανάκλασις*, as John i. 4. 'to commit iniquity, and to die therein,' is no more but to continue in his iniquity impenitently until death; now to say that a man was put to death for his fault, because he committed it, and continued impenitent in it, even unto the death which he was adjudged to, and which was inflicted on him for his fault, is an incoherent expression, it seems will puzzle as great a master of language as Mr. G. to make good.

Mr. G. endeavours to make the punishment threatened in the words 'he shall die for his iniquity,' precisely and

exclusively to signify eternal death (which the former interpretation doth not exclude), which he is no way able to make good. What he offers sect. 3. concerning the incongruity of the sense, and tautology of the expression of it, be not so understood, hath been already removed; the comparison ensuing instituted between these words, and those of 1 Cor. ix. 10, should have been enforced with some consideration of the coincidence of the scope of either place, with the expressions used in them; and though repentance (which is also added) will not deliver them from temporal or natural death, yet it will and may as [it] did Ahab in part, from having that death inflicted in the way of an extraordinary judgment.

Sect. 4. Mr. Goodwin offers sundry things, all of the same importance and tendency, all animated by the same fallacies or mistakes, to make good the sense he insists on, exclusively to all others, of these words, 'he shall die,' and he tells you, that, 'if the righteousness such men have done shall come into no account, that it shall not profit him as to his temporal deliverance, then it is impossible it should profit him as to his eternal salvation.' But first, according to our interpretation of the words, there is no necessity incumbent on us to affirm that the persons mentioned shall obtain salvation, though we say that eternal death is not precisely threatened in the words; but yet, that a man may not by the just hand of God be punished with temporal death for his faults and iniquities (as Josiah fell by the sword), and yet have his righteousness reckoned to him as to his great recompense of reward, is a strain of doctrine that Mr. Goodwin will scarce abide by. I dare not say that all who died in the wilderness of the children of Israel, went to hell, and came short of eternal life; and yet they all fell there because of their iniquities. But he adds,

Sect. 4. 'Again, that which God here threateneth against that double or twofold iniquity of backsliding, is opposed to that life which is promised to repentance and perseverance in their well-doing; but this life is confessed by all to be eternal life, therefore, the death opposite to it, must needs be eternal, or the second death. When the apostle saith, The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord, Rom. vi. 23. is it not evi-

dent from the antithesis, or opposition in the tendency between the death and life mentioned in it, that by that death, which he affirms to be the wages of sin, is meant eternal death, how else will the opposition stand?'

Ans. It is true the life and death here mentioned, the one promised ver. 9. the other threatened in those insisted on, are opposed, and of what nature and kind the one is, of the same is the other to be esteemed. It is also confessed, that the life promised in the covenant of mercy to repentance is eternal life, and the wages of sin mentioned in the law is death eternal; but that therefore, that must be the sense of the words when they are made use of, in answer to an objection expressed in a proverb concerning the land of Israel, and when it was temporal death that was complained of before in the proverb, the 'fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge' (they did not complain that they were damned for their fathers' sins), that Mr. Goodwin doth not attempt to prove; and I do not blame him for his silence therein. He says yet again,

'When God in the Scriptures threatens impenitent persons with death for their sins, doubtless he intends and means, eternal death, or that death which is the wages of sin. Otherwise we have no sufficient ground to believe or think, that men dying in their sins without repentance, shall suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, not only a temporal or natural death; which those who are righteous and truly eminent themselves suffer as well as they; therefore, tosay that God threatens impenitent apostates (in the place in hand), with a temporal death only, when as elsewhere he threatens impenitency under the lightest guilt of all, with eternal death, is in effect, to represent him as vehement and sore in his dissuasives from ordinary and lesser sins, as indifferent and remiss in dissuading from sins of the greatest provocation.'

Ans. The sum of this reason is, if the death there threatened to those men of our present contest be not death eternal, we have no sufficient ground to believe that God will inflict any death on impenitent apostates, but only that which is temporal or natural, which others die as well as they; and why so, I beseech you? is there no other place of Scripture, whence it may be evinced, that eternal death is

the wages of sin? Or is every place thereof where death is threatened to sin, so circumstantiated as this place is? Is the threatening every where given out upon the like occasion, and to be accommodated to the like state of things? These discourses are exceeding loose, sophistical, and inconclusive; neither is a violent death counted natural, though it be the dissolution of nature.

Neither is there any thing more added by Mr. Goodwin in all his considerations of the words of this passage of the Scriptures, than what we have insisted on: that he nextly mentioneth (that if God here threateneth impenitent sinners only with temporal death, then why should the most profligate sinners fear any other punishment?) is of more energy, for the confirmation and building up the sense which he imposeth on the words, than that which went before, they with whom he hath to do, will tell him that he doth all along most vainly assume, and beg the thing in question; viz. That the persons intimated, are absolutely impenitent sinners: and not so under some considerations only; that is, that do never recover themselves from their degeneracy from close walking with God; nor do the words indeed necessarily import any thing else; and for impenitent sinners in general (not those who are only so termed) there are testimonies sufficient in the scriptures concerning God's righteous judgment, in their eternal condemnation.

And this is the first testimony produced by Mr. G. for the proof of the saint's apostacy; a witness which of all others he doth most rely upon, and which he bringeth in with the greatest acclamation of success (before the trial), imaginable. That when he hath brought him forth, he gives us no account in the least, whence he comes, what is his business, or what he aims to confirm, nor can make good his speaking one word on his behalf. Indeed as the matter is handled, I something question whether lightly a weaker argument hath been leaned on, in a case of so great importance, than that which from these words is drawn for the apostacy of the saints; for as we have not the least attempt made, to give us an account of the context, scope, and intendment of the place (by which yet the expressions in the verses insisted on must be regulated), no more can any one expression in it, be made good, to be of that sense and sig-

nification, which yet alone will, or can yield, the least advantage to the cause, for whose protection it is so earnestly called upon. Now the leaders and captains of the forces Mr. Goodwin hath mustered in this 12th chapter being thus discharged, the residue, or the followers thereof, will easily be prevailed with, to return every one to his own place in peace.

The next place of Scripture produced to consideration, Mr. Goodwin ushers in, sect. 11. with a description of the adversaries with whom in this context he hath to do, and sets them off to public view, with the desirable qualifications of ignorance, prejudice, and partiality, having it seems, neither ingenuity enough candidly and fairly themselves to search into, and to weigh the Scriptures, wherein the case in question is clearly determined; nor skill enough to understand and receive them, when so dexterously opened to their hand by Mr. G. What they are, the Lord knoweth, will judge, determine, and in the appointed time declare: and it may be the day that shall manifest all things, will vindicate them from those reproaches; in the meantime, such expressions as these lie in the middle, between all parties at variance, exposed to the use of any that is pleased to take them up: the place insisted on in, the sequel of this preface, is the parable of our Saviour, Matt. xviii. 32, 33. the whole extent of the parable is from ver. 20. to the end of the chapter. Hence Mr. G. thus inferreth, sect. 11.

'Evident it is from our Saviour's rendition or application of the parable (so likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if, &c. speaking unto his disciples, ver. 1. and to Peter more particularly, ver. 21.) that persons truly regenerate, and justified before God (for such were they, to whom in special manner he addresseth the parable, and the application of it, and indeed the whole carriage of the parable sheweth, that it was calculated and formed only for such) may through high misdemeanours in sinning, as, for example, by unmercifulness, cruelty, oppression, &c. turn themselves out of the justifying grace and favour of God, quench the Spirit of regeneration, and come to have their portions with hypocrites and unbelievers.'

Ans. 1. This is not the only occasion whereupon we have to deal with this parable: the Socinians wrest it also with

sfaction of Christ, from the
the free forgiveness of sins
ers to do what he did; they
ithout satisfaction given or
itted against them. Mr. Good-
ity of drawing nigh to the in-
his place, makes use of it, or
ce his doctrine of the apostacy
, parables have their bounds and
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y prove nothing at all: to wring
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s neither that God forgives without
justice, being the judge of all the world,
may fall away by sins of unmercifulness
and so perish everlastingly; but that men
nt of mercy and forgiveness received from
ought to extend mercy and kindness to their
d threatening and revenging unmercifulness
on, in and on whomsoever it is found; whether
nce in us, or what it be, the Lord knows, and
but we are not able to stretch the lines of this
ne step towards what Mr. Goodwin would lengthen
to; that no persons whatever, must or ought to
the grace and pardoning mercy of God to them,
ave no bowels of compassion towards their brethren
rly taught; in making the rest of the circumstances
he parable argumentative, we cannot join with our ad-
sary, he himself in his so doing working merely for his
wn ends.

2. Finding his exposition of this parable liable and ob-noxious to an exception, in that it renders God changeable in his dealings with men, and a knot to be cast on his string, which he is not able to untie, he ventures boldly cut it in pieces, by affirming 'that indeed God loves no

man at all, with any love, but the approbation of the qualifications that are in him, and that he cannot be said to change in reference of that, which is not in him at all;' this he sets out, and illustrates variously with the dealings of men, and the laws that are made amongst them, rewarding what is good, and punishing what is evil, &c. words fully fitted in his apprehension, to the clearing of God from any shadow of alteration in that course of proceeding which to him he ascribes, and tells you, 'the root of the mistake concerning the love of God' towards any man's person, lies in that 'capital error, of personal election,' or a purpose of God to give grace and glory to any one in Christ: κάκου κόρακος κακών ὄον. That Mr. Goodwin doth at all understand the love of God, if his apprehension of it be uniform to what he expresseth here in disputation, I must question. An eternal, unchangeable love of God, to some, in Christ, is not now my task to demonstrate; it may through the patience and goodness of God, find a place in my weak endeavours for the Lord, ere long: when it will be a matter of delight to consider the Scriptures and testimonies of antiquity, that Mr. G. will produce for the eversion of such a personal election; for the present I shall only take notice of the face of his judgment in the thing, which, sect. 13. he here delivers: 'all the love which God bears to men, or to any person of man, is either in respect of their nature, and as they are men, in respect of which he bears a general or common love to them, or in respect of their qualification as they are good men, in one degree or other, in respect whereof he bears a more special love to them.' What that common love is, in Mr. Goodwin's doctrine, which God bears to all men, as men, we know full well: he also himself is not unacquainted how often it hath been demonstrated to be a vain and foolish figment (in the sense by him and his associates obtruded on us) derogatory to all the glorious properties of the nature of God, and inconsistent with any thing, that of himself he hath revealed. The demonstration and farther eviction whereof waits its season, which I hope draweth on. The special love which he bears persons in respect of their qualifications, is only his approbation of those qualifications, wherever they are, and in whomsoever: that these qualifications are faith, love, repentance, gospel

obedience, &c. is not called into question. I would fain know of Mr. Goodwin, on what account and consideration, some men, and not all, are translated from the condition of being objects of God's common love, to become objects of his peculiar love; or from whence spring these qualifications, which are the procurement of it; whether they are from any love of God to them, in whom they are? If not, on what account do men come to have faith, love, obedience, &c. If they are from any love of God, whether it be from the common love of God to man, as men? And if so, why are not all men endowed with those qualifications? If from his peculiar love, how come they to be the effects and causes of the same thing? Or whether indeed this assertion be not destructive to the whole covenant of grace, and the effectual dispensations of it in the blood of Christ? And to his second testimony I shall add no more.

The third place insisted on, is that of the apostle, 1 Cor. ix. 27. Hence he thus argueth:

'If Paul, after his conversion unto Christ, was in a possibility of being, or becoming a reprobate, or cast away, then may true believers fall away, both totally and finally (for finally ever includes totally) but the antecedent is true: Paul after his conversion, was in the possibility mentioned; *ergo*. The major proposition, I presume, will pass without control.'

Ans. That Mr. Goodwin is not able to make good either of the propositions in this syllogism, will evidently appear in the conclusion of our examination, of what he draws forth, new and old to that purpose; of the major he gives you only this account: 'It will pass, I presume, without control.' But by his favour, unless cleared from ambiguity of expressions and fallacy, it is not like to obtain so fair a passage as is presumed and fancied.

Though the term of 'possibility' in the supposition, and 'may be,' in the inference, seem to be equipollent, yet to render them of the same significancy, as to the argument in hand, they must both be used in the same respect; but if a possibility of being a reprobate (that is, one rejected of God, by a metonymy of the effect), be ascribed to Paul in respect of himself, and the infirmity of his own will as to abiding with God, in which case alone there is any appear

ance of truth in the assumption of this supposition, and the term of 'may be,' in respect of believers falling totally and finally away, respects the event and purpose, decrees or promise of God, concerning it (in which sense alone, it is any step to the purpose in hand), I deny the inference, and thereby at the very entrance, give check and control to Mr. Goodwin's procedure. That which is possible to come to pass, that term 'possible,' affecting the end, or coming to pass, must be every way, and in all respects possible: this is the intendment of the inference. That which is possible in respect of some certain causes, or principles (the terms of possibility affecting the thing itself, whereof it is spoken in its next causes) may be impossible on another account; and in this sense only is there any colour of truth contained in the supposition; so that the major proposition of this syllogism, is laid up and secured for doing any farther service in this case.

The minor is, 'But Paul after his conversion was in a possibility of becoming a reprobate or cast-away.'

Ans. He was not in respect of the event, upon the account of the purpose and promises of God of him and to him made in Christ; though any such possibility may be affirmed of him, in respect of himself, and his own will, not confirmed in grace, unto an impossibility of swerving: now this proposition he thus farther attempts syllogistically to confirm.

'That which Paul was very solicitous and industrious to prevent, he was in a possibility of suffering or being made. But Paul was very solicitous and industrious to prevent his being made a cast-away, as the Scripture in hand plainly avoucheth; he kept under his body and brought it in subjection; in order to prevent his becoming a cast-away: *ergo*, he was in danger or possibility of being made a cast-away. The reason of the consequence in the major proposition, is, because no man of understanding will be solicitous to prevent or hinder the coming to pass of such a thing, the coming to pass whereof, he knows to be impossible.'

Ans. Once more, The major is questioned. Paul might and ought to labour in the use of means, for the preventing of that, which in respect of himself he might possibly run into, God having appointed those means to be used for the

prevention of the end feared and avoided; although in respect of some other preventing cause, it was impossible he should so do. He who complained 'that in him, that is in his flesh dwelleth no good, that he had a law in his members leading him captive to the law of sin, and sin working in him all manner of concupisence' for whose prevention from running out into a course of sinning, God hath appointed means to be used, might use those means for that end, notwithstanding that God had immutably purposed, and faithfully promised, that in the use of those means, he should attain the end aimed at. And the reason Mr. Goodwin gives for the confirmation of the consequence is no other, but that which we have so often exploded; viz. That a man need not, ought not to use means for attaining of any end, though appointed and instituted of God for that end and purpose; if so be the end for which they are ordained shall certainly and infallibly be compassed and accomplished by them. Our Saviour Christ thought meet to use the ordinary ways for the preservation of his life, notwithstanding the promise of keeping him by the angels: and Hezekiah neglected not the means of life, notwithstanding the infallible promise of living so long, which he had received: Paul was careful in the use of means, to prevent that which in himself it was possible for him to run into, though he had or might have assurance, that through the faithfulness and power of God, in the use of those means (as an antecedent of the consequent, though not the conditions of the event), he should be preserved certainly and infallibly from what he was so in himself apt unto. So that whatever be the peculiar intendment of the apostle in this place, taking the term ἀδόκιμος in the largest sense possible, and in a significancy of the greatest compass, yet nothing will regularly be inferred thence, to the least prejudice of the doctrine I have undertaken to maintain.

And this may suffice as to the utmost of what Mr. Goodwin's argument from this place doth reach unto. There is another, and that a more proper sense of the place, and accommodated to the context and scope of the apostle wherewith the doctrine endeavoured to be confirmed from hence, hath not the least pretence of communication. And this ariseth (as was before manifested) from the scope of the place,

with the proper native signification of the word ἀδόκιμος, here translated a cast-away.

The business that the apostle hath in hand, from ver. 15. of the chapter, and which he presses to the end, is a relation of his own principles, ways, and deportment in the great work of the preaching of the gospel to him committed; in the last words of the chapter he acquaints us with one especial aim he had in the carrying on of that work, through the whole course of his employment therein. And is his such care and endeavour after personal mortification, holiness, and self-denial, that he might no way be lifted up, nor entangled with the revelations made to him; therein providing in the midst of the great certainty and assurance which he had, ver. 26. that he might approve himself a workman not needing to be ashamed, as not only preaching to others for their good, but himself also accepted of God, in the discharge of that employment, as one that had dealt uprightly and faithfully therein: ver. 17. he acquaints us with what is the state and condition of them that preach the gospel, their work may go on, and yet themselves not be approved in the work: this he laboured to prevent; walking uprightly, faithfully, sincerely, zealously, humbly, in the discharge of his duty: μήπως ἄλλοις κηρύξας, saith he, αὐτὸς ἀδόκιμος γένωμαι, 'least having preached to others he should not himself be approved and accepted in that work, and so lose the reward mentioned,' ver. 17. peculiar to them, who walk in the discharge of their duty with a right foot, according to the mind of God. The whole context, design, and scope of the apostle, with the native signification of the word ἀδόκιμος, leading us evidently and directly to this interpretation, it is sufficiently clear, that Mr. Goodwin is like to find little shelter for his apostacy, in this assertion of the apostle. And besides, whatever be the importance of the word, the apostle mentions not any thing but his conscientious diligent use of the means, for the attaining of an end, which end yet may fully be promised of God to be so brought about and accomplished.

Mr. Goodwin tells us indeed, that the word ἀδόκιμος 'is in the writings of the apostle, constantly translated reprobate; as Rom. i. 28. 2 Cor. xiii. 5—7. 2 Tim. iii. 8. Tit. i. 16. or is expressed by a word equivalent, as Heb. vi. 8.' How rightly

this is done, in his judgment he tells us not: that it is so done, serves his turn; and he hath no cause farther to trouble himself about it. The truth is, in most of the places intimated, the word is so restrained, either from the causes of the thing expressed, as Rom. i. 28. or the condition of the persons of whom it is affirmed, with some adjunct in the use of it, as 2 Tim. iii. 8. Tit. i. 16. that it necessarily imports a disallowance or rejection of God, as to the whole state and condition wherein they are of whom it is asserted, joined with a profligate disposition to farther abominations in themselves; that in any place it imports, what Mr. Goodwin would wrest it here unto, a man finally rejected of God, whatever may be the thought of others, he will not assert: and whatever the translation be, I would know of him, whether in any place, where the word is used, he doth indeed understand it in any other sense, than that which here he opposes; only with this difference, that in other places it regards the general condition and state of them, concerning whom it is affirmed; here only the condition of a man, restrained to the particular case of labouring in the ministry, which is under consideration, 2 Cor. xiii. 5—7. The word cannot be extended any farther than to signify a condition of men, when they are not accepted nor approved; which is the sense of the word contended for; nor yet Heb. vi. 8. though it be attended with those several qualifications of 'nigh unto cursing,' &c. The apostle ascending by degrees in the description of the state of the unfruitful barren land, says first it is ἀδόκιμος, or disallowed by the husbandman, as that which he hath spent his cost and labour about in vain; so that not only the original first signification of the word (as is known) stands for the sense contended for, but it is also evidently restrained to that sense by the context, design, and scope of the place, with the intendment of the apostle therein; the word being the same that in all other places of the writings of the same apostle, unless where it is measured, as to its extent and compass, by some adjoined expression, which is interpretative of it, as to the particular place, being still of the same signification.

Mr. Goodwin's ensuing discourse, is concerning the judgment of expositors upon the place, particularly naming Chrysostom, Calvin, Musculus, Deodate, the English annotators,

of whom notwithstanding, not any one do appear for him, so unhappy is he in his quotations, though sundry of good note (and amongst them Piscator himself) do interpret the word in the sense by him contended for; knowing full well, that it may be allowed in its utmost significancy, without the least prejudice to the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, as hath been manifested: of these mentioned by Mr. Goodwin, there is not any one, from first to last, but restrained the word to the reproachableness or inreproachableness of the apostle, in the discharge of the work of the ministry, the sense of it, which we also insist upon; to spend time and labour in searching the expressions of particular men, weighing and considering the coherences, design, and circumstances of their writings, is beside my intention; the judgment of what hath been affirmed is left to the intelligent reader, who supposeth it of his concernment to inquire particularly into it.

What is added of the scope of the place, sect. 15. p. 280. alone requires any farther consideration; this he then thus proposeth:

5. 'The scope of the place from ver. 23. evinceth the legitimacy of such a sense in both, above all contradiction; for the apostle, having asserted this for the reason, motive, and end, why he had made himself a servant to all men, in bearing with all men's weaknesses and humours in the course of his ministry; viz. that he might be partaker of the gospel (i. e. of the saving benefit or blessing of the gospel) with them, ver. 23. and again, that what he did, he did to obtain an incorruptible crown; ver. 25. plainly sheweth, that that which he sought to prevent, by running and fighting at such a high rate as he did, was not the blame and disparagement of some such misbehaviour, under which notwithstanding he might retain the saving love of God, but the loss of his part and portion in the gospel, and of that incorruptible crown which he sought by that severe hand, which he still held over himself, to obtain.'

Ans. The scope of the place was before manifested, in
ıswer to its dependance on the whole discourse foregoing,
›m ver. 15. where the apostle enters upon the relation of
deportment, in the work and service of the gospel, with
icular eye to his carriage therein, as to his use or for-

bearance, of the allowance of temporal things, from them to whom he preached, which was due to him by all right, whereby any claim in any kind whatever may be pursued, together with the express institution of the Lord Jesus Christ, by him before laid down. In this course he behaved himself with wisdom, zeal, and diligence, having many glorious aims in his eye, as also being full of a sense of the duty incumbent on him, ver. 6. to whose performance he was constrained by the law of Jesus Christ, as he also here expresses. Among other things that provoked him to, and supported him in, his hard labour and travel was, the love he bare to the gospel, and that he might have with others fellowship in the propagation and declaration of the glorious message thereof. This is his intendment ver. 23. τοῦτο δὲ, &c. For the gospel's sake, or the love he bare to it, he desired with others to be partaker of it; that is, of the excellent work of preaching of it; for of the benefit of the gospel he might have been partaker with other believers, though he had never been set apart to its promulgation. In his whole discourse he still speaks accommodately to his business in hand; for the describing of his work of apostleship, in preaching the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ; and as to the end of this work, he acquaints us that there was proposed before him the incorruptible crown of his Master's approbation (upon his lawful running and striving in the way of the ministry, whereto he was called), the peculiar glory of them whom he is pleased to employ in this service; and though the cause of his fighting at that rate as he did was not wholly the fear of non-approbation in that work, a necessity of duty being incumbent on him, which he was to discharge, yet he that knows how to value the crown of approbation from Christ, the holy angels and the church, of having faithfully discharged the office of a steward in dispensing the things of God, will think it sufficiently effectual to stir up any one to the utmost expense of love, pains, and diligence, that he may not come short of it: and of Mr. Goodwin's proof this is the issue.

His next is from Heb. vi. 4—7. with x. 26, 27. which he brings in, attended with the ensuing discourse, sect. 18.

'The next passage we shall insist upon to evince the possibility of a final defection in the saints, openeth itself in

these words; For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth, which drinketh in the rain, that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God. But that which beareth thorns and briers, is rejected and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned. Answerable hereunto is another in the same Epistle; For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses's law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace. Evident it is, that in these two passages the Holy Ghost, after a serious manner, and with a very pathetic and moving strain of speech and discourse (scarce the like to be found in all the Scriptures) admonisheth those who are at present true believers, to take heed of relapsing into the ways of their former ignorance and impiety. This caveat or admonition he presseth by an argument of this import; that in case they shall thus relapse, there will be very little or no hope at all, of their recovery or return to the estate of faith and grace, wherein now they stand. Before the faces of such sayings and passages as these, rightly understood and duly considered, there is no standing for that doctrine, which denies a possibility either of a total or final defection of the saints. But this light also is darkened in the heavens, by the interposition of the vails of these two exceptions: 1. That the apostle in the said passages affirms nothing positively, concerning the falling away of those he speaks of, but only conditionally and upon supposition. 2. That he doth not speak of true and sound believers, but of hypocrites, and such who had faith only in

shew, not in substance. The former of these exceptions hath been already nonsuited, and that by some of the ablest patrons themselves of the cause of perseverance; where we were taught from a pen of that learning, that such conditional sayings, upon which admonitions, promises, or threatenings are built, do at least suppose something impossible, however, by virtue of their tenor and form, they suppose nothing in being. But,

'As to the places in hand, there is not any hypothetical sign, or conditional particle to be found in either of them, as they come from the Holy Ghost, and are carried in the original. Those two ifs, appearing in the English translation, the one in the former place, the other in the latter, shew (it may be) the translators' inclination to the cause, but not their faithfulness in their engagement; an infirmity whereunto they were very subject, as we shall have occasion to take notice of the second time ere long, in another instance of the like partiality. But the tenor of both the passages in hand, is so ordered by the apostle, that he plainly declares, how great and fearful the danger is, or will be, when believers do, or shall fall away, not if, or in case they shall fall away.'

Ans. Of the two answers, which as himself signifieth, are usually given to the objections from these places of Scripture, that Mr. Goodwin doth not fairly acquit his hands of either, will quickly appear.

1. To the first, that the form of speech used by the apostle in both places is conditional, whence there is no arguing to the event, without begging the thing in question, or supposal, that the condition in all respects may be fulfilled, where it requires only to the constitution of it as a condition in the place of arguing, wherein it is used, that it may be possible in some only, he opposeth.

That some of them, who have wrote for the 'doctrine of the saints' perseverance,' have disclaimed the use of it, as to its application to the place in Ezekiel formerly considered; but yet leaving them to the liberty of their judgment, who are so minded, that the reason given by them, and here again repeated by Mr. Goodwin, doth not in the least enforce any to let go this answer to the objection proposed, that shall be pleased to insist upon it, hath been manifested.

To this Mr. Goodwin farther adds that weighty observation, that the word 'if,' is not in the original, and thence takes occasion to fall foul upon the translators, as having corrupted the passages out of favour to the doctrine contended for. I wish they had never worse mistaken, nor shewed more partiality in any other place; for first, will Mr. Goodwin deny that a proposition cannot be hypothetical, nor an expression conditional, unless the word 'if,' be expressed? were it worth the labour, instances might abundantly be given him in that language whereof we speak, to the contrary. He that shall say to him as he is journeying, going the right hand way you will meet with thieves, may be doubtless said to speak conditionally, no less than he that should expressly tell him, 'If you go the way on the right hand you shall meet with thieves.' Secondly, What clear sense and significancy can be given the words, without the supplement of the conditional conjunction, or some other term equipolent thereunto, Mr. Goodwith hath not declared. 'For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened,' &c. and they falling away: as the words (verbum de verbo) lie in the text, is scarce in English a congurous or significant expression: yea, καὶ παραπεσόντας in the syntax and coherence wherein it lies, is most properly and directly rendered, 'if they fall away;' as is also the force of the expression, chap. x. 26. Yea, thirdly, the connexion of the translation mentioned by Mr. Goodwin, doth not in the least relieve him, as to the delivery of the words from a sense, hypothetical. 'When they fall away' (though his 'when,' be no more in the text, than the translators' 'if'), doth either include a supposition, that they shall and must fall away certainly, and so requires the event of the thing whereof it is spoken, or it is expressive only of the condition, whereon the event is suspended; if it be taken in the first sense, all believers must fall away: if in the latter none may, notwithstanding any thing in this text (so learnedly restored to its true significancy), the words only pointing at the connexion, that is between apostacy and punishment. Notwithstanding then any thing here offered to the contrary, those who affirm that nothing can certainly be concluded from these places for the apostacy of any, be they who they will that are intended in them, because they are conditional assertions, manifesting

only the connexion between the sin and punishment expressed, need not be ashamed of, nor recoil from their affirmation in the least.

For mine own part, I confess, I do not in any measure think it needful to insist upon the conditionals of these assertions of the Holy Ghost, as to the removal of any, or all the oppositions that from them of old, or of late have been raised and framed against the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, there being in neither of the texts insisted on, either name or thing inquired after; nor any one of all the severals inquired into, and constantly in the Scriptures used in the description of the saints and believers of whom we speak. This I shall briefly in the first place demonstrate, and then proceed with the consideration of what is offered by Mr. Goodwin in opposition thereunto. Some few observations will lead us through the first part of this work designed. I say then,

1. There is an inferior common work of the Holy Ghost, in the dispensation of the word upon many to whom it is preached, causing in them a great alteration and change, as to light, knowledge, abilities, gifts, affections, life, and conversation, when the persons so wrought upon are not quickened, regenerate, nor made new creatures, nor united to Jesus Christ. I suppose there will not be need for me to insist on the proof of this proposition, the truth of it being notoriously known and confessed as I supposed amongst all that profess the name of Christ.

2. That in persons thus wrought upon, there is or may be, such an assent upon light and conviction to the truths proposed and preached to them, as is true in its kind, not counterfeit, giving and affording them in whom it is wrought, profession of the faith, and that sometimes with constancy to the death, or the giving of their bodies to be burned, with persuasions (whence they are called believers), of a future enjoyment of a glorious and blessed condition, filling them with ravished affections and rejoicings in hope, which they profess suitable to the expectation they have, of such a state and condition. This also might be easily evinced by innumerable instances and examples from the Scripture, if need required.

3. That the persons in and upon whom this work is

4. Things that accompany salvation, are better things than any in the persons mentioned were to be found. This the apostle asserts, ver. 9. 'we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation.' Now neither of these, either better things, or things that accompany salvation, were upon them whose apostacy the apostle supposeth. The exceptive particle at the entrance, with the apologetical design of the whole verse, ascribes such things to the saints, to whom the apostle speaks, as they were not partakers of, concerning whom he had immediately before discoursed. The faith of God's elect, whereby we are justified, is doubtless of the 'things that accompany salvation.'

5. The persons intended by the apostle, were such, as 'had need to be taught again the first principles of the oracles of God;' chap. v. 12. that were 'unskilful in a word of righteousness;' ver. 15. that had not their 'senses exercised to discern good and evil;' ver. 14. and are plainly distinguished from them, to whom the promise made to Abraham doth properly belong; chap. vi. 9—14, &c.

6. True believers are opposed in the discourse of the apostle, chap. vi. unto these persons lying under a possibility of apostacy, so far as they are cast under it, by the conditional discourse of it, upon sundry accounts. As,

1. Of their works and labour of love shewed to the name of God; ver. 10. of their preservation from the righteousness or faithfulness of God, in his promises; ver. 11. Of the immutability of the counsels of God, and his oath for the preservation of them; ver. 13. 17, 18. Of their sure and steadfast anchor of hope; ver. 19, &c. Upon all which considerations it is abundantly evident, that they are not believers, the children of God, justified, sanctified, adopted saints, of whom the apostle treats in the passages insisted on.

Sect. 28. Mr. Goodwin urges sundry reasons to prove that they are not hypocrites or outside professors only, but true believers that are described. If by hypocrites and outside professors he intends those who are grossly so, pretending to be what they are not, and what they know themselves not to be, we contend not about it: if by those expressions he compriseth also those whom we characterized in the entrance of this discourse, who unto their profession

of the faith, have also added those gifts and endowments, with the like, which we mentioned, notwithstanding all their advancement in light, conviction, joy, usefulness, conversation, do yet come short of union with Christ, I shall join issue with him, in the consideration of his reasons offered to be pregnant of proof for the confirmation of his assertion. He tells you, sect. 28. p. 288.

'1. There is no clause, phrase, or word, in either of the places, any ways characteristical or descriptive of hypocrisy, or hypocrites, there are none of those colours to be seen, which are wont to be used in drawing or limning the portraitures or shapes of those beasts, as distinguished from creatures of a better kind. All the lineaments of the persons presented in these tables, before the mention of their falling away, become the best and fairest faces of the saints (as hath been proved), and are not to be found in any other. Yea, the greatest and most intelligent believer under heaven, hath no reason but to desire part and fellowship with the hypocrites here described, in all those characters and properties which are attributed unto them before their falling away, or sinning wilfully.'

Ans. 1. The design of the apostle is not to discover, or give any characters of hypocrites, to manifest them to be such, but to declare the excellencies that are, or may be found in them, from the enjoyment of all which they may decline, and sin against the mercy and grace of them, to the aggravation of their condemnation. Neither had any lines used to particularize those beasts in their shape, wherein they differ from believers, been at all useful to the apostle's purpose; his aim being only to draw those wherein they are like them, and conformable to them. Neither,

2. Is it questioned whether these things here mentioned, may be found in true believers, and become them very well, rendering their faces beautiful, but whether there be not something else than what is here mentioned, that should give them being, as such, and life, without which these things are little better than painting. Nor,

3. Is it at all to the purpose, that believers may desire a participation in these characters with the persons described, but whether they who have no other characters or marks upon them of true believers, than what are here mentioned,

must necessarily be so accounted, or will of God be so accepted. Many a believer may desire the gifts of those hypocrites, who have not one dram of the grace, wherewith he is quickened. So that this first reason as pregnant as it seems of proof, is only indeed swelled and puffed up with wind and vanity. He adds,

'2. True believers, are in estate of honour, and are lifted up on high towards the heavens, in which respect they have from whence to fall. But hypocrites are as near hell already as lightly they can be, till they be actually fallen into it. From whence then are they capable of fallings? Men of estates may fail and break, but beggars are in no such danger. If hypocrites fall away, it must be from their hypocrisy, but this is rather a rising than a fall. A beggar cannot be said to break but only when he gets an estate. When he doth this, the beggar is broke.'

Ans. All that here is added, arises merely from the ambiguity of the word hypocrites; the persons that fall, are on all hands supposed to have, and enjoy all, that is made mention of in the texts insisted on, so that they have so much to fall from, as that thereupon Mr. Goodwin thinks them true believers. They have all the heights to tumble from, which we before mentioned, and very many others, that it is no easy task to declare. They fall from the excellencies they have, and not the hypocrisy, with which they are vitiated; from the profession of the faith, with honesty of conversation, &c. not from the want of root, or being built on the rock: so that this pretended pregnant reason is as barren as the former, to the production of the assertion laid down to be proved by it. He adds,

'3. It is no punishment at all to hypocrites to be under no possibility of being renewed again by repentance. Nay, in case they should fall away, it would be a benefit and blessing unto them, to be under an impossibility of being renewed again. For if this were their case it would be impossible for them to be ever hypocrites again, and (doubtless) it is no great judgment upon any man to be incapable of such a preferment.'

Ans. 1. Whether it be no punishment for them who have been in so good a way, a way of such tendency unto salvation, and such usefulness to the gospel, as these persons

supposed to be in; not to be renewed again to that state d condition, but to be shut up unrecoverably under the wer of darkness and unbelief, unto eternal wrath, when fore they were in a fair way for life and salvation, others ll judge beside Mr. Goodwin. Neither is there an affir- ation of their falling away from their hypocrisy, and be- renewed again thereunto, in any thing we assert in the position of this place, but their falling away from gifts nd common graces, with the impossibility of what kind ever it be, of being renewed to an enjoyment of them any more. His fourth and last attempt follows.

'4. And lastly, It stands off, forty foot at least, from all probability, that the apostle writing only unto those, whom he judged true and sound believers (as appears from seve- ral places in the epistle, as chap. iii. 14. vi. 9, &c.) should in the most serious, emphatical and weighty passages here- of, admonish them of such evils or dangers, which only con- cerned other men, and whereunto themselves were not at all obnoxious, yea and whereunto if they had been obnox- ious, all the cautions, admonitions, warnings, threatenings, in the world would not (according to their principles, with whom we have now to do) have relieved or delivered them. To say that such admonitions are a means to preserve those from apostacy, who are by other means (as suppose the ab- solute decree of God, or the interposal of his irresistible power for their perseverance, or the like) in no possibility of apostatizing, as to say that washing is a means to make snow white, or the rearing up of a pillar in the air a means to keep the heavens from falling. But more of this in the chapter following.'

Ans. What exact measure soever Mr. Goodwin seemeth to have taken of the distance of our assertion from all pro- bability (which he hath accurately performed, if we may take his word), yet upon due consideration it evidently appears, that he is not able to disprove it, from coming close up to the absolute truth of the meaning and scope of the Holy Ghost in the places under consideration. For besides what hath been already argued, and proved, it is evident,

1. That the apostle wrote promiscuously to all that pro- fess the name of Christ and his gospel, of whom he tells you, chap. iii. 14. (one of the places we are directed to by

Mr. Goodwin) that those only are made 'partakers of Christ, who hold the beginning of their confidence to the end;' for the rest, notwithstanding all their glorious profession, gifts, and attainments, yet they are not truly made partakers of Christ (whereby he cuts the throat of Mr. Goodwin's whole cause), and chap. vi. 9. that there were amongst them, who had attained things accompanying salvation, and better things than any of those had done, who notwithstanding their profession, yet held it not fast without wavering, but every day fell away; so that though he judged no particulars before their apostacy, yet he partly intimates, that all professors were not true believers, and therefore, does teach them all to make sure work in closing with Christ, lest they turn apostates and perish in so doing.

2. That conditional comminations and threatenings, discovering the connexion that is between the antecedent and consequent, that is in the proposition of them, are and may be of use to the saints of God, preserved from the end threatened and the cause deserving it, upon the accounts, reasons, and causes, that have been plentifully insisted on, hath more than once been declared; and the objections to the contrary the same with those here insisted on, answered and removed. This being all that Mr. Goodwin hath to offer, by the way of reason, to exclude the persons formerly described to be the only concernment of the place of Scripture insisted on, there remains nothing but only the consideration of the severals of the passages debated, wherein by the light that hath already broken forth, from the circumstances, aims, ends, and connexion of the places, we may so far receive direction, as not to be at all stumbled in our progress.

With the consideration of the several expressions in the passages under debate, Mr. Goodwin proceedeth, sect. 19. and first insisteth on that of chap. vi. where it is said that they were ἅπαξ φωτισθέντες, once enlightened; whence he thus argues.

'Believers are said to be enlightened, and to be children of light in the Lord; 2 Cor. iv. 6. Heb. x. 32. Luke xvi. 8. Eph. v. 8. therefore they who here are said to be enlightened were true believers.'

Ans. 1. I shall not insist upon the various interpreta-

ng of the word φωτισθέντες, very
bly, affirming, that their partici-
baptism is here only intended by
much might be offered were it
ng to our business in hand. Nor,
manifest that persons may be en-
come to Christ savingly by faith,
im and justification by him, a thing
imself, or if he should, it were a very
him of his mistake, by a sole en-
pleased to give an account of his faith
r entreaty) of him to declare what he
tion, whence it would quickly appear,
is to his own principles to deny, that it
who yet never come to be, or at least by
y not be said to be true believers; but this

G. doubtless knowing that this argument
the texts of Scripture, whereby he illustrates
of the remonstrants) hath been again and
d against, as illogical and unconcluding, and
with the principles of them that use it, ought
again have imposed it upon his reader without
pt at least, to free it from the charge of imperti-
kness, and folly, wherewith it is burdened. Illu-
is ascribed to believers, illumination is ascribed
men, therefore, these persons are believers; a lit-
sideration will recover to Mr. Goodwin's mind the
f this argument, so far as that he will scarce use it
lore.

ect. 20. He takes up another expression from chap. x. That they are said to receive ἐπίγνωσιν τῆς ἀληθείας, 'the knowledgemeut of the truth;' whence he argues in the ume manner and form, as he had newly done from the term of illumination; ἐπίγνωσις ἀληθείας 'is ascribed to believers,' therefore, they are all so, to whom it is ascribed.

But he tells you in particular that, sect. 20. 'in the latter of the said passages the persons spoken of are said to have received ἐπίγνωσιν τῶν ἀληθείας, i. e. 'the acknowledgement of the truth;' which expression, doth not signify the bare notion of what the gospel teacheth, of which they are ca-

pable who are the most professed enemies thereof, but such a consenting and subjection thereunto, which worketh effectually in men to a separating of themselves from sin and sinners. This is the constant import of the phrase in the Scriptures.'

Ans. All this may be granted, yet nothing hence concluded, to evince the persons to whom it is ascribed to be true believers; men may be so wrought upon, and convinced by the word and Spirit, sent forth to convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, as to acknowledge the truth of the gospel, to profess subjection to the gospel, and to yield to it so far as to separate themselves from sin and sinners, in such a manner and to such a degree (not dissembling but answering their convictions), as to bless themselves oftentimes in their own condition, and to obtain an esteem with the people of God to be such indeed, as they profess themselves to be, and yet come short of that union and communion with the Lord Christ, which all true believers are made partakers of. It is not of any use or importance to examine the particular places mentioned by Mr. Goodwin, wherein as he supposeth the expression of the knowledge or acknowledgement of the truth denotes that which is saving, and comprehendeth true faith, unless he attempted to prove from them, that the word could signify nothing else, or that a man might not be brought to an acknowledgement of the truth, but that he must of necessity be a true believer; neither of which he doth, or if he did, could he possibly give any seeming probability to. There may be a knowing of the things of the gospel in men, and yet they may come short of the happiness of them that do them; there is a knowledge of Christ, that yet is barren as to the fruit of holiness.

3. In the next place the persons queried about, are said to be 'sanctified by the blood of the covenant;' of this Mr. Goodwin says, sect 21. i. e. 'By their sprinkling herewith, to be sprinkled from such who refuse this sprinkling: as likewise from the pollutions and defilements of the world. To be sanctified when applied unto persons, is not found in any other sense throughout the New Testament, unless it be where persons bear the consideration of things; 1 Cor. vii. 14. But of this signification of the word which we claim in

instances are so frequent and obvious, that we
ed to mention any.'

f no more be intended in this expression, but what
in gives us in the exposition of it, viz. that they
nkled with it, as to be separate from them that re-
rinkling (that is openly), as likewise from the pol-
defilements of the world, we shall not need to con-
it: for men may be so sprinkled, and have such an
conviction come upon them by the preaching of
nd blood-shedding of Christ, as to be separated
who professedly despise it, and the open publica-
word, and yet be far from having 'consciences
m dead works to serve the living God.' And,
t the term of 'sanctifying,' when applied to per-
ot used in any other sense than what is by Mr.
here expressed, is an assertion that will be ren-
ess until Mr. Goodwin be pleased to give it an edge
ning in what sense he here intends to play it. Of
'sanctifying' there are, as hath been declared, two
nent and known significations. First, to separate
mmon use, state or condition, to dedicate, consecrate,
part to God by profession of his will, in a peculiar
is frequently so expressed. Secondly, really to pu-
anse with spiritual purity, opposed to the defilement
s denoted thereby. In the exposition given of the
here used by Mr. G. he mentions both. Separation,
t chiefly, as the nature of the sanctification whereof
ks, as also some kind of spiritual cleansing from sin:
what sense he precisely would have us to understand
e doth not tell us.

omewhat question, whether it be used in the Epistle to
Hebrews in any other sense than the former, which was
Temple sense of the word; the apostle using many
s of the old worship in their first signification; however,
it is used in that sense, in the New Testament, appro-
ated to persons, without any such respect as that men-
ned by Mr. G. is sufficiently evinced by that of our
viour, John xvii. 19. ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἐγὼ ἁγιάζω ἐμαυτὸν, ex-
his dedicating and separating himself to his office;
re instances may be had, if we stood in any need

3. That many are said to be sanctified and holy in the latter sense, as it signifieth spiritual purity, in respect of their profession of themselves so to be, and some men's esteem of them, who yet were never wholly and truly purged from their sin, nor ever had received the Holy Spirit of promise, who alone is able to purge their hearts, doth not now want its demonstration, that work hath been somewhile since performed. So that Mr. G. makes not any progress at all, in the proof of what he has undertaken, viz. that they are true believers in the sense of that denomination which we assert, who in these places are described. For a close, ἐν ᾧ ἡγιάσθη, is far more properly referred to Christ, than to the persons spoken of, and that sense the remonstrants themselves do not oppose.

That they are said, chap. vi. 4. 'to have tasted the heavenly gift' is urged in the next place, sect. 22. to prove them true believers; both the object and the act are here in question, what is meant by the heavenly gift, and what by tasting of it. I shall not look into the text beyond the peculiar concernment of the cause in hand: somewhat might be offered for the farther clearing of one and other. At present it sufficeth that be the heavenly gift what it will, the persons of our contest, are said only to taste of it: which though absolutely, and in itself, is not an extenuating expression, but denotes a matter of high aggravation of the sin of apostacy, in that they were admitted to some taste and relish of the excellency and sweetness of the heavenly gift; yet comparatively to their feeding on it, digesting it, growing thereby, it clearly denotes their coming short of such a participation of it, who do but taste of it. That to taste, doth not in the first genuine signification in things natural, signify to eat and digest meat, so as to grow by it, I suppose needs no proof; that in that sense it is used in the Scriptures, John ii. 9. Matt. xxvii. 34. is by Mr. Goodwin confessed. This he tells you is only when the taste or relish of things is desired to be known: but that our Saviour tasted of the gall and vinegar out of a desire to know the relish of it, he will hardly persuade those who are accustomed to give never so easy a belief to his assertions. By the 'heavenly gift' Mr. G. in the first place intends Jesus Christ: now if by tast eating and drinking of Christ be intended as is he

Christ himself will determine this strife, telling us that whosoever eateth his flesh shall be saved; John vi. 35. 49—51. 54—57. So that either to taste, is not to eat, or they that taste cannot perish.

Three things are urged by Mr. Goodwin to give proof of his interpretation of these words of the Holy Ghost. Saith he,

'1. Whatsoever is meant by this heavenly gift, certain is it that by tasting, is not meant any light or superficial impression made upon the hearts or souls of men, through the sense or apprehension of it, but an emphatical, inward and effectuous relish and sense of the excellent and heavenly sweetness and pleasantness of it, opposed to a bare speculation or naked apprehension thereof. The reason hereof is, because the tasting of this heavenly gift here spoken of, is not mentioned by the apostle in a way of easing or extenuating the sin of those that should fall away from Christ; but by way of aggravation and exaggeration of the heinousness and unreasonableness thereof, and withal more fully to declare and assert the equitableness of that severity in God, which is here denounced against those, that shall sin the great sin of apostacy here spoken of. It must needs be much more unworthy and provoking in the sight of God, for a man to turn his back upon and renounce those ways, that profession, wherein God hath come home to him, and answered the joy of his heart abundantly, than it would be in case he had only heard of great matters, and had his head filled, but had really found and felt nothing with his heart and soul truly excellent and glorious.

'2. And besides, the very word itself, *to taste*, ordinarily in Scripture, imports a real communion with, or participation and enjoyment (if the thing be good) of, that which was said to be tasted. O taste, and see,[a] saith David, that the Lord is good. His intent doubtless was not to invite men to a slight or superficial taste of the goodness of God, but to a real, cordial, and thorough experiment and satisfactory enjoyment of it. So when he that made the great invitation in the parable, expressed himself thus to his servants:[b] For I say unto you, that none of those who were bidden shall taste of my supper. His meaning clearly was they should not partake of the sweetness, and benefit

[a] Psal. xxxiv. 8. Luke xiv. 24.

with those who should accept of his invitation, and come unto it. In like manner when Peter speaketh thus to his Christian Jews,[c] If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious; his meaning (questionless) is not to press his exhortation directed unto them in the former verse upon a consideration of any light or vanishing taste, such as hypocrites and false-hearted Christians may have, of the graciousness of the Lord, but of such a taste, wherein they had had a real, inward, and sensible experiment thereof.

'3. And besides, according to the sense of our adversaries in the present debate, if the taste of the heavenly gift we speak of should imply no more, but only a faint or weak perception of the sweetness and glorious excellency of it, yet even this may be sufficient to evince truth of grace and faith in men. For their opinion is, that a man may be a true believer with a grain of mustard-seed only, i. e. with a very slender relish and taste of spiritual things; yea, their sense is, that in some cases of desertion, and under the guilt of some enormous courses, they may have little or no taste of them at all.'

Ans. 1. To the first discourse, considering what hath been already delivered, I shall only add, that although it be no aggravation of the sin of apostacy, that they who fall into it, have but 'tasted of the heavenly gift,' yet it is that they have tasted of it: that taste of its relish, preciousness, and sweetness, which they have obtained, whereby they are distinguished from them whose blindness and hardness keeps them up to a total disrelish and contempt of it, is abundantly enough to render their sin heinous and abominable. When men by the preaching of the word, shall be startled in their sins, troubled in their consciences, forced to seek out for a remedy, and shall come so far as to have some (though but a light) taste of the excellency of the gospel, and the remedy provided for sinners in Jesus Christ, and then through the strength of their lusts and corruptions, shall cast it off, reject it, and spit out of their mouth, as it were, all that of it whereby they found the least favour in it, no creature under heaven can be guilty of more abominable undervaluing of the Lord Christ, and the love of God in him, than such persons. What degree of love, joy, repentance, peace, faith, persons many times arrive unto, when with

[c] 1 Pet. ii. 3.

Herod they have heard the word gladly, and done many things willingly, &c. hath been by others abundantly demonstrated. This sufficeth our present purpose, that they do make such a progress in the ways of God, and find so much excellency in the treasure of grace and mercy, which, he hath provided in Jesus Christ, and tenders in the gospel that he cannot but look upon their apostacy and renunciation of him (whereby they proclaim to all the world as much as in them lies, that there is not that real goodness, worth, and excellency to be found in him, as some pretend) as the highest scorn and contempt of him, and his love in Christ, and revenges it accordingly.

2. To the second, which consists of instances collected by the remonstrants to manifest the use of the word 'tasting' to be other than what we here confine it to. I say, 1. That the word as it is applied to spirituals, being borrowed and metaphorical, not in its analogy to be extended beyond making trial, for our coming to some knowledge of a thing in its nature, the use of it in one place cannot prescribe to the sense of it in another, no more than any other metaphorical expression whatever; but it must in the several places of its residence, be interpreted according to the most peculiar restriction that the matter treated of doth require. If then, Mr. G. can prove that any thing in this place under consideration enforces such a sense, all his other instances are needless; if he cannot, they are useless.

It might easily be manifested, and hath been done by others already, that in all the places mentioned by Mr. Goodwin, the word is not expressly significant of any thorough, solid eating and participation, or that which is said to be tasted, as is pretended. But to manifest this, is not our concernment; there being no reason in the world to enforce any such sense as is contended for in the place under present consideration.

3. To the third, wherein he argues with his predecessors from our opinion concerning faith, a brief reply will suffice. That a faint, weak perception and relish of heavenly things, is sufficient to make a man a believer, is so far from being our opinion, that we utterly disclaim them from being believers to whom this is ascribed, if nothing else be added in their description, from whence they may be so esteemed. It

is true, faith is sometimes little, and weak in the exercise of it, yea a man may be so overtaken with temptations, or so clouded under desertions, as that it may not deport itself with any such considerable vigour, as to be consolatory to him in whom it is, or demonstrative of him unto others to be what he is; but we say that the weakest, lowest, meanes measure and degree of this faith, is yet grounded and fixed in the heart, where though it be not always alike lively and active, yet it is always alive, and gives life. How far believers may fall into the guilt of enormous courses, has been already manifested. The intendment of the expression, is to disadvantage the persuasion he opposeth. We do not grant that believers may fall into any enormities, but only what God himself affirms they may, and yet not utterly be cast out of his love and favour in Jesus Christ. Farther, the the weakest faith, of which we affirm that it may be true and saving, though it may have no great perception nor deep taste of heavenly things for the present, yet hath it always that of adherence to God in Christ, which is exceedingly exalted above any such perception of heavenly things whatever, that may be had or obtained without it: so that from the consideration of what hath been spoken, we may safely conclude, that Mr. G. hath not been able to advance one step in his intendment, to prove that the persons here described are true believers.

I know no sufficient ground or reason to induce me to any large consideration of the other two or three expressions that remain, and that are insisted on by Mr. G. seeing it is evident from their associates, which have been already examined, that there is none of them can speak one word to the business in hand. I shall, therefore, discharge them from any farther attendance, in the service they have been forced unto.

The next privilege insisted on, which to these persons is ascribed, is, 'that they are made partakers of the Holy Ghost.' In men's participation of the Holy Ghost, either the gifts or graces of the Holy Ghost are intended. The graces of the Holy Ghost, are either more common and inchoative, or special and completing of the work of conversion; that it is the peculiar regenerating grace of God, that is intended in this expression, of being 'made partakers of the Holy Ghost,' and not the gifts of the Spirit, or those common graces of illumi-

nation, unto which persons not truly converted, but only wrought upon by an effectual conviction in the preaching of the word, may attain, Mr. G. is no way able to prove. And there is also, this consideration rising up with strength and power, against that interpretation; viz. that those that are so made partakers of the Spirit as to be regenerated, quickened, sealed, comforted thereby, which are some of the peculiar acts of his grace, in and towards the souls of those that believe, can never lose him, nor be deprived of him, as was manifested before at large, being sealed and confirmed, not only in the present enjoyment of the love and favour of God, but also unto the full fruition of the glory, which is provided for them, and therefore cannot fall away, as these are supposed to do. What there is in Mr. Goodwin's discourse, on this passage, sect. 23, 24. to weaken in the least what is usually answered, or farther to enforce his exposition of the place, I am not able to apprehend, and shall therefore proceed with what remaineth.

All that follows in the place of the apostle under contest, is regulated by the word 'taste:' 'They have tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.' What the sense and importance of that word is, hath been already declared: neither can it be proved that the persons here described, do so taste of the good word of God, as to mix the promises of it with faith; or of the powers of the world to come, as to receive them in power in their hearts by believing; so that farther contest about these words seems to be altogether needless.

How far men may proceed in the ways of God, what progress they may make in amendment of life, what gifts and common graces they may receive, what light and knowledge they may be endued withal, what kind of faith, joy, repentance, sorrow, delight, love, they may have in and about spiritual things; what desire of mercy and heaven, what useful gifts for the church's edification they may receive, how far they may persuade their own souls, and upon what grounds, that their condition God-ward is good and saving, and beget an opinion in others that they are true believers, and yet come short of union with Christ, building their houses on the sand, &c. is the daily task of the preachers of the gospel to manifest, in their pressing that exhortation

of the apostle unto their hearers, to examine and try themselves in the midst of their profession, whether Christ be in them of a truth or no. I shall not now enter upon that labour; the reader knows where to find enough in the writings of holy and learned men of this nation, to evince that men may arrive at the utmost height of what is in this place of the apostle by the Holy Ghost ascribed to the persons of whom he speaks, and yet come short of the state of true believers. Mr. G. indeed tells us, sect. 27.

'The premises relating to the two passages yet under debate, considered, I am so far from questioning whether the apostle speaks of true and sound believers in them, that I verily judge, that he purposely sought out several of the most emphatical and signal characters of believers; yea, such which are hardly, or rather not at all, to be found in the ordinary sort of true believers, but only in those that are most eminent amongst them, that so he and such, who though sound, yet were weak in the faith, might fall away and perish, but that even such also, who were lifted up nearer unto heaven than their fellows, might through carelessness and carnal security, dash themselves in pieces against the same stone, and make shipwreck of their souls, as well as they.'

Ans. 1. The house built on the sand, may oftentimes be built higher, have more fair parapets and battlements, windows and ornaments, than that which is built upon the rock; yet all gifts and privileges, equal not one grace, in respect of light, knowledge, gifts, and many manifestations of the Spirit; such who never come up to that faith which gives real union and communion with Jesus Christ, may far outgo those that do.

2. That there is any thing mentioned, or any characters given of believers, much less such as are singular and not common to all, Mr. G. hath not in any measure been able to evince. There is not the meanest believer in the world but he is a child of God, and heir of the promises, and brother of the Lord Christ; hath union with him, hath his living in him, is quickened, justified, sanctified, hath Christ made to him wisdom, &c. hath his righteousness in God, and his life hid in him in Christ, is passed from death to life, brings forth fruit, and is dear to God as the apple of his eye, accepted with him, approved of him, as his temple wherein

he delighteth to dwell. That any thing in this place mentioned and insisted on, any characters we have given of the persons whom we have considered, do excel or equal, or denote any thing in the same kind, with these and the like excellencies of the meanest believers, will never be proved, if we may judge of future successes from the issue of all former attempts for that end and purpose.

And this is the issue of Mr. Goodwin's third testimony produced to confirm the doctrine of the saints' apostacy, but hypothetically, and under such a form of expression as may not be argued from, nor of saints and true believers at all. His fourth followeth.

His fourth testimony he produceth, and endeavours to manage for the advantage of his cause, sect. 31. in these words:

'The next Scripture testimony we shall produce and briefly urge in the cause now under maintenance, is in the same epistle with the former, and speaketh these words: Now the just shall live by faith, but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. Our English translators, out of good will, doubtless, to a bad cause, have almost defaced this testimony, by substituting any man for the just man, for whereas they translate, But if any man draw back, the original readeth, *καὶ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται*, i. e. and if, or but if, he, i. e. the just man who should live by his faith, viz. if he continues in it, shall draw back. Beza himself likewise before them, had stained the honour of his faithfulness, with the same blot in his translation. But the mind of the Holy Ghost in the words is plain and without parable; viz. that if the just man who lives, i. e. who at present enjoys the favour of God, and thereby is supported in all his trials, and should live always by his faith, if he continues in it, as Pareus well glosseth, shall draw back, or shall be withdrawn, viz. through fear or sloth, (as the word properly signifieth; see Acts xx. 27.) from his believing, my soul shall have no pleasure in him, i. e. (according to the import of the Hebraism) my soul shall hate or abhor him to death; as it is also expounded in the words immediately following; But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but, &c. From hence then evident it is, that such a man who is a just or righteous man, and under promise of living for ever by his faith (and therefore also, a true and

sound believer); may draw back, or be withdrawn, to the contracting of the hatred of God, and to destruction in the end. The forlorn hope of evading, because the sentence is hypothetical or conditional, not positive, hath been routed over and over, yea and is abandoned by some of the great masters themselves of that cause, unto the defence whereof it pretendeth. And however, in this place, it would be most preposterous. For if it should be supposed, that the just man who is in a way and under a promise of living by his faith, were in no danger or possibility of drawing back, and that to the loss of the favour of God, and ruin of his soul, God must be conceived to speak here at no better rate of wisdom or understanding, than thus; The just shall live by his faith: but if he shall do that, which is simply and utterly impossible for him to do, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. What savour of wisdom, yea or of common sense, is there in admonishing or cautioning men against such evils, which there is no possibility for them to fall into, yea and this known unto themselves? Therefore this testimony, for confirmation of the doctrine we maintain, is like a king upon his throne, against whom there is no rising up.'

Ans. What small cause Mr. Goodwin hath to quarrel with Beza or other translators, and with how little advantage to his cause this text is produced, shall out of hand be made appear.

1. The words as they cry are, Ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται, καὶ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτῷ· ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἐσμὲν ὑποστολῆς εἰς ἀπώλειαν, ἀλλὰ πίστεως εἰς περιποίησιν ψυχῆς. In the foregoing part of the chapter, the apostle had treated of two sorts of persons: 1. Such as to forsake the assemblies of the saints, withdrew from the church and ordinances of Christ; and so by degrees fell off with a total and everlasting backsliding; of these the apostle speaks, describing their ways and end, from ver. 25. unto ver. 32. thence forward. 2. He speaks to them and of them, who abode in their persecutions, and under all their afflictions, to hold fast their confidence, which he also farther exhorts them to, that by 'patient abiding in well-doing, they might receive the reward;' concerning these both, having told them of the unshaken kingdom of Christ, that should be brought in, notwithstanding the apostacy of many, of whose iniquity God would take

vengeance on; he lays down that eminent promise of the gospel, 'the just by faith shall live,' words often used to express the state and condition of believers, of those who are truly and unfeignedly so; the Lord being faithful in his promise, 'the justified person shall live,' or obtain life everlasting. It is the promise of eternal life, that is here given them, as that which they had not as yet received, but in patience they were to wait to receive, after they had done the whole will of God: that any of these should so draw back, as that the Lord's soul should have no pleasure in them, is directly contrary to the promise here made of their living. The particle καὶ, in the next words, is plainly adversative and exceptive, as it is very many times in the New Testament; and that as to the persons of whom he is speaking: at ζήζεται, the period is full, the description of the state of the just by faith is completed, and in the next words, the state of backsliders is entered upon; καὶ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται referring to them, whom by their apostacy and subduction of themselves from Christian assemblies, he had before described; there is an ellipsis in the words to be supplied, but some indefinite term, to give them the sense intended: this Beza and our translators have done by that excepted against causelessly by Mr. G. for if a translator may make the text speak significantly in the language whereunto he translates it, the introduction of such supplements is allowed him.

2. The following expression puts it out of all question, that this was the intendment of the apostle; for he expressly makes mention, and that in reference to what was spoken before of two sorts of people, to whom his former expressions are respectively to be accommodated; the words are ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐκ, as above. Mr. Goodwin, to make us believe that he took notice of these words, hath this passage of them (as it is also expounded in the words immediately following), but we are not of them who draw back to perdition; but, &c. but what, I pray, is expounded in these words; 'that drawers back shall be destroyed?' this is all he takes notice of in them. Evidently the words are an application of the former assertions unto several persons: there are, says he, some who are τῆς ὑποστολῆς, and some that are τῆς πίστεως: those, saith he, who are τῆς ὑποστολῆς, they shall be destroyed,

those who are τῆς πίστεως, they shall live; evidently and beyond all contradiction, assigning his former assertions of, 'the just shall live by faith,' and, 'if any man shall draw back,' to several persons, by a distribution of their lot and portions to them. In ver. 28. he lays down in thesis the state and condition of believers and backsliders: in ver. 29. he makes application of the position he laid down to himself and them; 1. Negatively, that they were not of the former sort of them that draw back, &c. 2. Positively, that they were of the rest of them that believed: and those expressions, ver. 29. οὐκ ἐσμεν ὑποστολῆς, ἀλλὰ πίστεως, do undeniably affirm two sorts of persons in both places to be spoken of, and that ἐὰν ὑποστειληται can by no means be referred to our δίκαιος, which would intermix them, whom the apostle as to their present state and future condition, held out in a contradistinction one to the other, unto the end. All that ensues in Mr. Goodwin's discourse, being built upon this sandy foundation, that it is the believer, of whom God affirms that he shall live by faith, who is supposed to be τῆς ὑποστολῆς, contrary to the express assertion of the apostle, it needs no farther consideration, although he is not able to manifest any strength in conclusion drawn from suppositions of events, which may be possible in one sense, and in another impossible.

But before we pass farther, may not this witness which Mr. Goodwin hath attempted in vain to suborn to appear and speak in his cause, be demanded what he can speak, or what he knows of the truth of that which he is produced to oppose. This then it confesseth and denieth not, at first word, that of professors there are two sorts; some are ὑποστολῆς, of such as do or may draw back unto perdition; some πίστεως, which believe to the saving of the soul, and that in opposition to the others. Also, that those who withdraw are not πίστεως, not true believers, nor ever were, notwithstanding all their profession and what their gifts and attainments, in and under their profession. So that the testimony produced, keepeth still its place, and is 'as a king upon his throne, against whom there is no rising up,' but yet speaks quite contrary, clearly, evidently, distinctly, to what is pretended; both on the one hand and the other, is our thesis undeniably confirmed in this place of the apostle. If all

those who fall away to perdition were never truly or really of the faith, then those who are of the faith cannot fall away; but they who fall away to perdition, were never truly nor really of the faith, or true believers, *ergo*. The reason of the consequent of the first proposition is evident; for their not being of the faith is plainly included as the reason of their apostacy, and their being of the faith, intimated as that which would have preserved them from such defection; the minor is the apostles, we are not ὑποστολῆς, of them that draw back, but of them that believe, which plainly distinguisheth them that draw back from believers. Again, if true believers shall live, and continue to the saving of their souls, in opposition to them that fall away to perdition, then they shall certainly persevere in their faith: for these two are but one and the same; but that true believers shall live, and believe to the saving of their souls, in opposition to them that draw back, or subduct themselves to perdition, is the assertion of the Holy Ghost: *ergo*. I presume by this time Mr. Goodwin is plainly convinced that indeed he had as good, yea and much better, for the advantage of his cause in hand, have let his witness have abode in quietness, and not entreated him so severely to denounce judgment against that doctrine which he seeks by him to confirm.

Sect. 32. the parable of the stony-ground, Matt. xiii. 20, 21. comes next to consideration; the words chosen to be insisted on are in the verses mentioned, 'but he that received the seed into stony places, is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for awhile,' &c. That by the stony ground is meant true believers, is that which Mr. Goodwin undertakes to prove: but how in his whole discourse, I profess I perceive not: I must take leave to profess that I cannot find any thing looking like a proof or argument to evince it, from the beginning to the end of this discourse, though something be offered to take off the arguments that are used to prove it to be otherwise. Doth Mr. Goodwin think that men will easily believe that faith, which hath neither root, fruit, nor continuance, to be true and saving faith? doubtless they might have very low apprehensions of saving faith, union with Christ, justification, sanctification, adoption, &c.

wherewith it is attended, who can once entertain any such imagination: that which is tendered to induce us to such a persuasion, may briefly be considered.

Saith he, sect. 32. 'Now those signified by the stony ground, he expressly calleth *προσκαίρους*, i. e. persons who continue for a time, or a season, i. e. (as Luke explaineth), *ὅι πρὸς καιρὸν πιστεύουσι*, who believe for a season, so that those who only for a time believe, and afterward make defection from Christ, and from the gospel, are nevertheless numbered and ranked by him amongst believers. The words in Luke are very particular. They on the rock, are they which when they hear, receive the word with joy; and those have no root, which for awhile believe, and in time of temptation fall away. From whence it appears, that the hearers here described, are not compared to the rock or stony ground, for the hardness of their hearts, forasmuch as they are said to receive the word with joy, which argues an ingenuity and teachableness of spirit in them; and is elsewhere (viz. Acts ii. 41.) taken knowledge of by the Holy Ghost, as an index or sign of a true believer; but for such a property, disposition, or temper as this; viz. not to give or afford the word so received, a radication in their hearts and souls, so intimous, seriōus, and solid, which should be sufficient to maintain their belief of it, and good affections to it, against all such occurrences in the world, which may oppose, or attempt either the one or the other.'

Ans. 1. The first reason intimated, is, that they are said to be *πρόσκαιροι*, a term given them plainly to distinguish them from true believers; men that make a profession for a season, expressly opposed to them who receive the word in good and honest hearts. If the word had denoted any excellency, any thing that was good in them, then there had been some pretence to have insisted on it, to prove them true believers; but to demonstrate the truth of their faith from their hypocrisy, and their excellencies from that which expressly denotes their unworthiness, is a strange way of arguing. They are persons, saith our Saviour, that make profession for a little while, and then decay, not like them who receive the word in good and honest souls; therefore saith Mr. G. they are true believers; but,

2. In Luke they are said to believe for a season: Mr.

Goodwin is not now to learn, how often in the Scripture they are said to believe, who only profess the faith of the gospel, though the root of the matter be not in them; that of John ii. 23—25. may suffice for undeniable instance; or John vi. 64. may farther expound it: their believing for a season, is but the lifeless, worthless, fruitless profession for a season, as their destruction from the good ground doth manifest. But,

3. They are said to 'receive the word with joy, which argues ingenuity and tractableness of spirit in them:' no more than in Herod, who heard the word gladly; or in the Jews, when the preaching of Ezekiel was pleasant or desirable to them; or those described, Isa. lviii. 2. 'who sought God daily,' and delighted to know his ways, in the midst of their abominable practices. From the similitude itself, he yet farther attempts this uncouth assertion.

'But as the blade which springs from one and the same kind of seed, as suppose from wheat or any other grain, though sown in different, yea or contrary soils, is yet of the same species or kind, the nature of the soil not changing the specifical nature of the seed that is sown in it, and God giving to every seed its own body, of what temper soever the ground is, where it is sown: in like manner that faith, which springs from the same seed of the gospel must needs be of one and the same nature and kind, though this seed be sown in the hearts of never so differing a constitution and frame; the temper of the heart, be it what it will not being able specifically to alter either the gospel or the natural fruit issuing from it. And as a blade or ear of wheat, though it be blasted before the harvest, is not hereby proved not to have been a true blade or ear of wheat before it was blasted, in like manner the withering or decay of any man's faith, by what means or occasion soever, before his death, doth not prove it to have been a false, counterfeit, or hypocritical faith, or a faith of any other kind than that which is true, real, and permanent unto the end.'

Ans. 1. It hath been formerly observed, that similitudes are not argumentative, beyond the extent of that particular wherein their nature, as such, doth consist. The intendment of Christ in this parable, is to manifest that many hear the word in vain, and bring forth no fruit of it at all: of

these, one sort is compared to stony ground, that brings forth a blade, but no fruit: no fruit, is no spirit, though there be a blade, or no blade. The difference between the one's receiving of seed, and the others manifested by our Saviour in this parable, is in this, that one brings forth fruit, and the other doth not: farther, the seed of wheat, or the like brings forth its fruit in a natural way; and, therefore, whatever it brings forth, follows in some measure the nature of the seed, but that seed of the gospel brings forth its fruit in a moral way, and therefore may have effects of sundry natures; that which the seed of wheat brings forth is wheat, but that which the gospel brings forth is not gospel but faith, besides what the wheat brings forth, if it come not, nor ever will to be wheat in the ear, it is but grass, and not of the same nature and kind, with that which is wheat actually, though virtually and originally there be the nature of wheat in the root, yet actually wheat is not in the blade, that hath not, nor ever will have ear. If the seed of wheat be so corrupted in the soil where it is sown, that it cannot bring forth fruit, that which it doth bring forth, whatever it be, is of a different nature from that which is brought forth to perfection, by the seed of wheat in good ground. Again, faith is brought forth by the seed of the gospel, when the promises and exhortations of the gospel being preached unto men, do prevail on them, to give assent unto the truth of it: that every such effect wrought, is true justifying faith, giving union with Jesus Christ, Mr. Goodwin cannot prove; that effects specifically different, may be brought forth by the same seed of the gospel, seeing to some it is a savour of life unto life, and to some a savour of death unto death, needs not much proving. Some receive the word, and turn it into wantonness, some are cast into the mould of it, and are translated into the same image; if the temper of the heart, as is said, is not able specifically to alter the gospel: but that there may not fruit of various kinds be born in the heart that assents to it, that receives it in the upper crust and skin of it, is the question. Neither is it a blade occasionally withering before the harvest, but a slight receiving of the seed, so as that it can never bring forth fruit that is intimated. In sum, this whole discourse is a great piece of sophistry, in comparing natural and moral causes in the pro-

ducing of their effects, a thing not intended in the parable, and whereabout he that will busy himself, 'jungat vulpes, et mulgeat hircos.' This is that which our Saviour teacheth us in the similitude of seed sown in the stony ground. The word is preached unto some men, who are affected with it for a season, assent unto it, but not coming up to a cordial close with it, after awhile wither away: and such as these, we say, were never true believers: a small matter will serve to make a man a true believer, if these are such. What tendency this doctrine may have to lull men asleep in security, when Christ is not in them of a truth, may easily appear and be judged: if men who are distinguished from other believers, by such signal differences as these here are, may yet pass for true believers, justified, sanctified, adopted ones, 'solvi mortales curas,' the way to heaven is laid open to thousands, who I fear will never come to the end of the journey.

What remains of Mr. G.'s discourse on this text, is spent in answering some objections which are made against his interpretation of the place; it grows now late, and this task grows so heavy on my hand, that I cannot satisfy myself in the repetition of any thing spoken before, or delivered, which would necessarily enforce a particular consideration of what Mr. G. here insists on, let him at his leisure answer this one argument, and I shall trouble him no farther in this matter.

That faith which hath neither root nor fruit, neither sound heart, nor good life, that by and by, readily and easily yields upon temptation to a total defection, is not true, saving, justifying faith. The root of faith, taken spiritually, is the habit of it in the heart; a spiritual living habit, which if it reside not in the heart, all assent whatever wants the nature of faith, true and saving; the fruits of faith are good works and new obedience; that faith which hath not works, James tells you, is dead; dead and living faith doubtless differ specifically. Again, faith purifieth the heart, and when a heart is wholly polluted, corrupted, naught and false, there dwells no faith in that heart; it is impossible it should be in a heart, and not at least radically and fundamentally purify it: farther, Mr. Goodwin hath told us, that true believers are so fortified against apostacy, that they are in only a pos-

sibility, in no probability, or great danger of total apostacy: and, therefore, they who presently and readily fall away, cannot be of those, who are scarce in any danger of so doing, upon any account whatever: but that the faith here mentioned, hath neither root nor fruit, good heart to dwell in, nor good life attending it, but instantly upon trial and temptation, vanisheth to nothing, we are taught in the text itself: therefore, the faith here mentioned, is not true nor saving faith. That it hath no root is expressly affirmed, ver. 21. and all the rest of the qualities mentioned are evidenced from the opposition wherein they who are these believers, are set unto true believers, they receive the word in 'good and honest hearts,' they bring 'forth fruit with patience,' they 'endure in time of trial;' like the house built on the rock, when the house built on the sand falls to the ground.

One word more with this witness before we part: they who receive the word in good and honest hearts, and keep it, do bring forth fruit with patience, and fall not away under temptation. So saith the testimony; but all true believers receive the word in good and honest hearts: *ergo*. Which is the voice of Mr. Goodwin's fourth witness in this cause.

The 2 Pet. ii. 18—22. is forced to bring up the rear of the testimonies by Mr. G. produced to convince the world of the truth and righteousness of his doctrine of the saints apostacy, ending his whole discourse in the mire. Observations from the text or context, from the words themselves, or the coherence to educe his conclusion from, he insists not on. Many excellent words we have concerning the clearness and evidence of this testimony, and the impossibility of avoiding what hence he concludes, we want not, but we have been too often inured to such a way of proceeding to be now moved at it, or troubled about it, were the waters deep, they would not make such a noise. The state and condition of men here described by the apostle, is so justly delineated to the eye, by the practice of men in the world to whom the gospel is preached, that I do not a little wonder how any man exercised in the ministry, should once surmise that they are true believers of whom he here treats; taking the words in the sense wherein they are commonly received, and in the utmost extent, who sees them not daily exemplified in and upon them, who are yet far enough from

the faith of God's elect. By the dispensation of the word, especially when managed by a skilful master of assemblies, men are every day so brought under the power of their convictions, and the light communicated to them, as to acknowledge the truth and power of the word, and in obedience, thereunto to leave off, avoid, and abhor the ways and courses wherein the men of the world, either not hearing the word at all, or not so wrought upon by it, do pollute themselves and wallow with all manner of sensuality; and yet are not changed in their natures, so as to become new creatures, but continue indeed, and in the sight of God, dogs and swine, oftentimes returning to their vomit and mire, though some of them hold out in the professions to the end; and these are they, whom commonly our divines have deciphered under the name of formalists, having a 'form of godliness but denying the power of it,' who are here all at once by Mr. Goodwin interested in Christ, and 'the inheritance of the saints in light.' To make good his enterprise he argues from the remonstrants, sect. 40. p. 297.

'1. If the said expressions import nothing, but what hypocrites, and that 'in sensu composito,' i. e. whilst hypocrites, are capable of, then may those be hypocrites, who are separated from men that live in error, and from the pollutions of the world, and that through the knowledge of Jesus Christ: and on the other hand those may be saints, and sound believers, who wallow in all manner of filthiness, and defile themselves daily with the pollutions of the world. This consequence, according to the principles and known tenets of our adversaries, is legitimate and true, inasmuch as they hold that true believers may fall so foul and so far, that the church, according to Christ's institution may be constrained to testify that they cannot bear them in their outward communion, and that they shall have no part in the kingdom of Christ, except they repent, &c. But whether this be wholesome and sound divinity or no, to teach that they who are separate from sinners, and live holily and blamelessly in this present world, and this by means of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, may be hypocrites and children of perdition, and they on the other hand who are companions of thieves, murderers, adulterers, &c. saints and sound believers, I leave to

men whose judgments are not turned upside down with prejudice to determine.'

1. Sundry things might be observed from the text, to render this discourse altogether useless, as to the end for which it is produced: as 1. That sundry copies, ver. 13. instead of ὅλως read ὀλίγον, who almost, or in a little way or measure, so escaped as is said. 2. That it is not said, that those who are so escaped may apostatize; it is said, indeed, that the false prophets and teachers, δελεάζουσιν do lay baits for them, as the fisher doth for the fish that he would take, by proposing unto them a liberty, as to all manner of impurity and uncleanness, but that in so doing, they prevail over them is not affirmed. 3. The conditional expression, ver. 20. may be used in reference to the false prophets, and not to them that are said to 'escape the pollutions of the world;' and if to them, that nothing can be argued from thence, hath plentifully upon several occasions been already demonstrated: but to suffer Mr. B. to leap over all these blots in his entrance, and to take the words in his own sense and connexion; I say,

1. In what large and improper sense, such persons as we treat of, are termed hypocrites, hath been declared. Those who pretend to be godward, what they knew themselves not to be, making a pretence of religion, to colour and countenance them in vice and vicious practises, or sensual courses, wherein they allow and bless themselves, we intend not: but such as in some sincerity, under the enjoyment and improvement of gifts and privileges, do or may walk conscientiously, as Paul before his conversion, and yet are not unitedto Christ.

2. Of these we say, that they may so escape, &c. but that sound believers, may wallow in all manner of sinfulness, and defile themselves with all manner of pollutions, we say not: nor will any instance given amount to the height and intendment of those expressions, they being all alleviated by sundry considerations, necessarily to be taken in with that of their sinning.

3. If we may compare the worst of a saint, with the best of a formal professor, and make an estimate of the states and conditions of them both, we may cast the ballance on the wrong side.

4. We do say that Simon Peter was a believer when he denied Christ, and Simon Magus a hypocrite, and in the bond of iniquity, when it was said he believed. We do say, that a man may be alive notwithstanding many wounds and much filth upon him, and a man may be dead, without either the one or the other, in that eminently visible manner. He adds,

'2. The persons here spoken of, are said to have, ὄντως, truly and really escaped from those, who live in error. Doubtless a hypocrite cannot be said, truly or really, but in shew or appearance at most, to have made such an escape (I mean from men who live in error), considering that for matter of reality and truth, remaining in hypocrisy, he lives in one of the greatest and foulest errors that is.'

The whole force of this second exception, lies upon the ambiguity of the term 'hypocrite;' though such as pretend religion, and the worship of God, to be a colour and pretext for the free and uncontroled practising of vile abominations, may not be said so to escape it, yet such as these we have before described, with their convictions, light, gifts, duties, good conscience, &c. may truly and really escape from them, and their ways who pollute themselves with the errors of idolatry, false-worship, superstition, and the pollutions of practices against the light of nature, and their own convictions. It is added that,

'3. A hypocrite, whose foot is already in the snare of death, cannot upon any tolerable account, either of reason or common sense, be said to be allured (i. e. by allurements to be deceived) or overcome by the pollutions of the world, no more than a fish that is already in the net, or fast upon the hook, can be said to be allured by a bait held to her.'

Ans. But he that hath been so far prevailed upon by the preaching of the word, as to relinquish and renounce the practices of uncleanness; wherein he sometime wallowed and rolled himself, may be prevailed upon and overcome by temptations, to backslide into the same abominable practices, wherein he was formerly engaged, deserting that way and course of attending to the word, and yielding obedience thereunto, which he had entertained, that in its own nature tended to a better end.

4. Says he, 'Hypocrites are nowhere said, neither can they with any congruity to Scripture phrase, be said to have escaped the pollutions of the world through the acknowledgment (for so the word ἐπίγνωσις should be translated) of Jesus Christ, the acknowledgment of the truth, and so of Christ and of God, constantly in the Scriptures, importing a sound and saving work of conversion: as we lately observed in this chap. sect. 20.'

Ans. It sufficeth that the thing itself intimated, is sufficiently revealed in the Scriptures, and confirmed by the examples of all those who have acknowledged the truth of the word to the putting on a form of godliness, though they come not up to the power or saving practice of it; and truly I cannot but admit, that any one who hath had never so little experience in the work of the ministry, or made never so little observation of religion, should once suppose that all such persons must needs be accounted true believers, regenerate, &c.

Mr. Goodwin shuts up this chapter with a declaration concerning the usefulness of cautions and admonitions given to believers, about backsliding, upon a supposition of an infallible promise of God for their perseverance. I presume the reader is weary as well as myself, and having in the last chapter, heard him out to the full, what he is able to say to this common-place of opposition to the doctrine we have thus far asserted, and offered those considerations of the ways of God's dealings with believers, to preserve them in the course of their obedience, and walking with him which I hope, through the mercy and goodness of God, may be satisfactory to them that shall weigh them, I shall not burden him with the repetition of any thing already delivered, nor do judge it needful for to add any thing more.

OF THE

MORTIFICATION OF SIN

IN

BELIEVERS:

THE

NECESSITY, NATURE, AND MEANS OF IT:

WITH A RESOLUTION OF

SUNDRY CASES OF CONSCIENCE,

THEREUNTO BELONGING.

PREFACE.

CHRISTIAN READER,

I SHALL in a few words acquaint thee with the reasons that obtained my consent to the publishing of the ensuing discourse. The consideration of the present state and condition of the generality of professors, the visible evidences of the frame of their hearts and spirits, manifesting a great disability of dealing with the temptations, wherewith from the peace they have in the world, and the divisions that they have among themselves, they are encompassed, holds the chief place amongst them. This I am assured is of so great importance, that if hereby I only occasion others to press more effectually on the consciences of men, the work of considering their ways, and to give more clear direction for the compassing of the end proposed, I shall well esteem of my lot in this undertaking. This was seconded by an observation of some men's dangerous mistakes, who of late days have taken upon them to give directions for the mortification of sin, who being unacquainted with the mystery of the gospel, and the efficacy of the death of Christ, have anew imposed the yoke of a self-wrought-out mortification on the necks of their disciples, which neither they, nor their forefathers were ever able to bear. A mortification they cry up and press, suitable to that of the gospel, neither in respect of nature, subject, causes, means, nor effects;

which constantly produces the deplorable issues of superstition, self-righteousness, and anxiety of conscience, in them who take up the burden which is so bound for them.

What is here proposed in weakness, I humbly hope will answer the spirit and letter of the gospel, with the experiences of them, who know what it is to walk with God, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace. So that if not this, yet certainly something of this kind is very necessary at this season, for the promotion and furtherance of this work of gospel mortification in the hearts of believers, and their direction in paths safe, and wherein they may find rest to their souls. Something I have to add, as to what in particular relates unto myself. Having preached on this subject unto some comfortable success, through the grace of him that administereth seed to the sower, I was pressed by sundry persons, in whose hearts are the ways of God, thus to publish what I had delivered, with such additions and alterations, as I should judge necessary. Under the inducement of their desires, I called to remembrance the debt, wherein I have now for some years stood engaged unto sundry noble and worthy Christian friends, as to a treatise of communion with God, some while since promised to them;* and thereon apprehended, that if I could not hereby compound for the greater debt, yet I might possibly tender them this discourse of variance with themselves, as interest for their forbearance of that of peace and communion with God. Besides, I considered that I had been providentially engaged in the public debate of sundry controversies

* Since the first edition of this treatise, that other also is published.

in religion, which might seem to claim something in another kind, of more general use, as a fruit of choice, not necessity: on these and the like accounts, is this short discourse brought forth to public view, and now presented unto thee. I hope I may own in sincerity, that my heart's desire unto God, and the chief design of my life in the station wherein the good providence of God hath placed me, are, that mortification and universal holiness may be promoted in my own, and in the hearts and ways of others, to the glory of God, that so the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, may be adorned in all things; for the compassing of which end, if this little discourse (of the publishing whereof this is the sum of the account I shall give) may in any thing be useful to the least of the saints, it will be looked on as a return of the weak prayers, wherewith it is attended by its unworthy author,

JOHN OWEN.

OF THE

MORTIFICATION OF SIN

IN

BELIEVERS, &c.

CHAP. I.

...ation of the whole ensuing discourse laid in Rom. viii. 13. *...f the apostle opened. The certain connexion between true ... and salvation. Mortification the work of believers. The ... ciple efficient cause of it. What meant by the body in the ... postle. What by the deeds of the body. Life in what sens... in this duty.*

...what I have of direction to contribute to the carr... the work of mortification in believers, may rec... and perspicuity, I shall lay the foundation of ... words of the apostle, Rom. viii. 13. 'If ye by... do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live;' ... the whole to an improvement of the great evange... and mystery contained in them.

The apostle having made a recapitulation of his doc... stification by faith, and the blessed estate and cond... em, who are made by grace partakers thereof, ver... of this chapter, proceeds to improve it to the holines... olation of believers.

Among his arguments and motives unto holiness, ... he mentioned containeth one, from the contrary e... and effects of holiness and sin. 'If ye live after the fles... shall die.' What it is to 'live after the flesh,' and wha... 'die,' that being not my present aim and business, I ... otherwise explain, than as they will fall in with the ... of the latter words of the verse, as before proposed.

In the words peculiarly designed for the foundatic... the ensuing discourse, there is,

First, A duty prescribed; 'mortify the deds of the b...

Secondly, The persons are denoted to whom it is ...ribed; 'ye, if ye mortify.'

Thirdly, There is in them a promise annexed to that duty; 'ye shall live.'

Fourthly, The cause or means of the performance of this duty, the Spirit; 'if ye through the Spirit.'

Fifthly, The conditionality of the whole proposition, wherein duty, means, and promise are contained; 'if ye,' &c.

1. The first thing occurring in the words as they lie in the entire proposition, is the conditional note, εἰ δὲ, 'but if.' Conditionals in such propositions may denote two things,

(1.) The uncertainty of the event or thing promised, in respect of them to whom the duty is prescribed. And this takes place where the condition is absolutely necessary unto the issue, and depends not itself on any determinate cause, known to him to whom it is prescribed. So we say, 'if we live, we will do such a thing.' This cannot be the intendment of the conditional expression in this place. Of the persons to whom these words are spoken, it is said, ver. 1. of the same chapter, 'There is no condemnation to them.'

(2.) The certainty of the coherence and connexion that is between the things spoken of. As we say to a sick man, If you will take such a potion, or use such a remedy, you will be well. The thing we solely intend to express, is the certainty of the connexion that is between the potion or remedy, and health. And this is the use of it here. The certain connexion that is between the mortifying of the deeds of the body, and living, is intimated in this conditional particle.

Now the connexion and coherence of things being manifold, as of cause and effect, of way and means, and the end; this between mortification and life, is not of cause and effect properly and strictly; 'For eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ;' Rom. vi. 23. but of means and end. God hath appointed this means for the attaining that end, which he hath freely promised. Means, though necessary, have a fair subordination to an end of free promise. A gift and procuring cause in him to whom it is given, are inconsistent. The intendment then of this proposition, as conditional, is, that there is a certain infallible connexion and coherence between true mortification and eternal life: if you use this means, you shall obtain that end; if you do mortify, you shall live. And herein lies the main motive unto, and enforcement of the duty prescribed.

2. The next thing we meet withal in the words is, the persons to whom this duty is prescribed; and that is expressed in the word 'ye,' in the original included in the verb, θανατοῦτε, 'if ye mortify;' that is, ye believers; ye to whom 'there is no condemnation,' ver. 1. ye that are 'not in the flesh, but in the Spirit,' ver. 5. who are 'quickened by the Spirit of Christ,' ver. 10, 11. to you is this duty prescribed. The pressing of this duty immediately on any other is a notable fruit of that superstition and self-righteousness that the world is full of; the great work and design of devout men ignorant of the gospel; Rom. x. 3, 4. John xv. 5. Now, this description of the persons, in conjunction with the prescription of the duty, is the main foundation of the ensuing discourse, as it lies in this thesis or proposition.

The choicest believers, who are assuredly freed from the condemning power of sin, ought yet to make it their business, all their days, to mortify the indwelling power of sin.

3. The principal efficient cause of the performance of this duty, is the Spirit; εἰ δὲ πνεύματι, 'if by the Spirit.' The Spirit here is the Spirit mentioned, ver. 11. the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of God, that 'dwells in us,' ver. 9. that 'quickens us,' ver. 11. 'the Holy Ghost,' ver. 14. the 'Spirit of adoption,' ver. 15. the Spirit 'that maketh intercession for us,' ver. 26. All other ways of mortification are vain, all helps leave us helpless, it must be done by the Spirit. Men, as the apostle intimates, Rom. ix. 30—32. may attempt this work on other principles, by means and advantages administered on other accounts, as they always have done, and do; but, saith he, this is the work of the Spirit, by him alone is it to be wrought, and by no other power is it to be brought about. Mortification from a self-strength, carried on by ways of self-invention, unto the end of a self-righteousness, is the soul and substance of all false religion in the world. And this is a second principle of my ensuing discourse.

4. The duty itself; 'Mortify the deeds of the body,' is nextly to be remarked.

Three things are here to be inquired into. (1.) What is meant by the body. (2.) What by the deeds of the body. (3.) What by mortifying of them.

(1.) The body in the close of the verse, is the same with

the flesh in the beginning. 'If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die,' but if ye 'mortify the deeds of the body,' that is, of the flesh. It is that which the apostle hath all along discoursed of, under the name of the flesh, which is evident from the prosecution of the antithesis between the Spirit and the flesh, before and after. The body then here is taken for that corruption and depravity of our natures, whereof the body in a great part, is the seat and instrument: the very members of the body being made servants unto unrighteousness thereby; Rom. vi. 19. It is indwelling sin, the corrupted flesh or lust, that is intended. Many reasons might be given of this metonymical expression, that I shall not now insist on. The body here is the same with *παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος*, and *σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας*, the 'old man,' and the 'body of sin,' Rom. vi. 6. or it may synecdochically express the whole person considered as corrupted, and the seat of lusts, and distempered affections.

(2.) The deeds of the body; the word is *πράξεις*, which indeed denoteth the outward actions chiefly. The works of the flesh, as they are called, *τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκὸς*; Gal. v. 19. which are there said to be manifest; and are enumerated. Now, though the outward deeds are here only expressed, yet the inward and next causes are chiefly intended, the 'axe is to be laid to the root of the tree;' the deeds of the flesh are to be mortified in their causes, from whence they spring; the apostle calls them deeds, as that which every lust tends unto; though it do but conceive and prove abortive, it aims to bring forth a perfect sin.

Having both in the seventh, and the beginning of this chapter, treated of indwelling lust and sin, as the fountain and principle of all sinful actions, he here mentions its destruction under the name of the effects, which it doth produce: *πράξεις τοῦ σώματος*, are as much as *φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς*, Rom. viii. 6. the 'wisdom of the flesh,' by a metonymy of the same nature with the former; or as the *παθήματα*, and *ἐπιθυμίαι*, the 'passions and lusts of the flesh;' Gal. v. 24. whence the deeds and fruits of it do arise; and in this sense is the body used, ver. 10. 'The body is dead because of sin.'

(3.) To mortify; *εἰ θανατοῦτε*, 'if ye put to death;' a metaphorical expression, taken from the putting of any living thing to death. To kill a man, or any other living thing, is

to take away the principle of all his strength, vigour, and power, so that he cannot act or exert, or put forth any proper actings of his own; so it is in this case. Indwelling sin is compared to a person, a living person, called 'the old man,' with his faculties, and properties, his wisdom, craft, subtlety, strength; this, says the apostle, must be killed, put to death, mortified, that is, have its power, life, vigour, and strength, to produce its effects, taken away by the Spirit. It is indeed, meritoriously, and by way of example, utterly mortified and slain by the cross of Christ; and the old man is thence said to be 'crucified with Christ;' Rom. vi. 6. and 'ourselves to be dead with him;' ver. 8. and really initially in regeneration, Rom. vi. 3—5. when a principle contrary to it, and destructive of it, Gal. v. 17. is planted in our hearts; but the whole work is by degrees to be carried on towards perfection all our days. Of this more in the process of our discourse. The intendment of the apostle in this prescription of the duty mentioned, is, that the mortification of indwelling sin, remaining in our mortal bodies, that it may not have life and power to bring forth the works or deeds of the flesh, is the constant duty of believers.

5. The promise unto this duty is life; 'Ye shall live.' The life promised, is opposed to the death threatened in the clause foregoing. 'If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die;' which the same apostle expresseth, 'Ye shall of the flesh reap corruption;' Gal. vi. 8. or destruction from God. Now, perhaps the word may not only intend eternal life, but also the spiritual life in Christ, which here we have, not as to the essence and being of it, which is already enjoined by believers, but as to the joy, comfort, and vigour of it; as the apostle says in another case, 'Now I live if ye stand fast;' 1 Thess. iii. 8. Now my life will do me good; I shall have joy and comfort with my life; ye shall live, lead a good, vigorous, comfortable, spiritual life whilst you are here, and obtain eternal life hereafter.

Supposing what was said before of the connexion between mortification and eternal life, as of means and end, I shall add only, as a second motive to the duty prescribed, that,

The vigour, and power, and comfort, of our spiritual life, depends on the mortification of the deeds of the flesh.

CHAP. II.

The principal assertion concerning the necessity of mortification proposed to confirmation. Mortification the duty of the best believers; Col. iii. 5. 1 Cor. ix. 27. *Indwelling sin always abides; no perfection in this life;* Phil. iii. 12. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Gal. v. 17, *&c. The activity of abiding sin in believers;* Rom. vii. 23. James iv. 5. Heb. xii. 1. *Its fruitfulness and tendency. Every lust aims at the height in its kind. The Spirit and new nature given to contend against indwelling sin;* Gal. v. 17. 2 Pet. i. 4, 5. Rom. vii. 23. *The fearful issue of the neglect of mortification;* Rev. iii. 2. Heb. iii. 13. *The first general principle of the whole discourse hence confirmed. Want of this duty lamented.*

HAVING laid this foundation, a brief confirmation of the forementioned principal deductions will lead me to what I chiefly intend.

I. That the choicest believers, who are assuredly freed from the condemning power of sin, ought yet to make it their business all their days to mortify the indwelling powerof sin.

So the apostle, Col. iii. 5. 'Mortify therefore your members, which are upon earth.' Whom speaks he to? Such as were 'risen with Christ,' ver. 1. such as were 'dead with him,' ver. 3. such as whose life Christ was, and who should 'appear with him in glory;' ver. 4. Do you mortify, do you make it your daily work, be always at it whilst you live; cease not a day from this work, be killing sin, or it will be killing you; your being dead with Christ virtually, your being quickened with him, will not excuse you from this work. And our Saviour tells us, how his Father deals with every branch in him that beareth fruit; every true and living branch, 'He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit;' John xv. 2. He prunes it, and that not for a day or two, but whilst it is a branch in this world. And the apostle tells you what was his practice, 1 Cor. ix. 27. 'I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.' I do it, saith he, daily, it is the work of my life, I omit it not, this is my business. And if this were the work and business of Paul who was so incomparably exalted in grace, revelations, enjoyments, privileges, consolations, above the ordinary measure of believers; where may we possibly bottom an exemption from this work and duty whilst we are in this world. Some brief account of the reasons hereof may be given.

1. Indwelling sin always abides, whilst we are in this world, therefore it is always to be mortified. The vain, foolish, and ignorant disputes of men about perfect keeping the commands of God, of perfection in this life, of being wholly and perfectly dead to sin, I meddle not now with. It is more than probable, that the men of those abominations never knew what belonged to the keeping of any one of God's commands, and are so much below perfection of degrees, that they never attained to a perfection of parts in obedience, or universal obedience in sincerity. And therefore, many in our days who have talked of perfection, have been wiser, and have affirmed it to consist in knowing no difference between good and evil. Not that they are perfect in the things we call good, but that all is alike to them, and the height of wickedness is their perfection. Others who have found out a new way to it, by denying original indwelling sin, and a tempering the spirituality of the law of God, unto men's carnal hearts; as they have sufficiently discovered themselves to be ignorant of the life of Christ and the power of it in believers; so they have invented a new righteousness that the gospel knows not of, being vainly puffed up by their fleshly minds. For us, who dare not be wise above what is written, nor boast by other men's lines of what God hath not done for us, we say, that indwelling sin lives in us in some measure and degree whilst we are in this world. We dare not speak as 'though we had already attained, or were already perfect;' Phil. iii. 12. our inward man is to be renewed day by day, whilst here we live, 2 Cor. iv. 16. and according to the renovations of the new, are the breaches and decays of the old. Whilst we are here, we 'know but in part;' 1 Cor. xiii. 12. having a remaining darkness to be gradually removed by our 'growth in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ;' 2 Pet. iii. 18. And 'the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, so that we cannot do the things that we would;' Gal. v. 17. and are therefore defective in our obedience, as well as in our light; 1 John i. 8. We have a 'body of death;' Rom. vii. 24. from whence we are not delivered, but by the death of our bodies, Phil. iii. 21. Now it being our duty to mortify, to be killing of sin whilst it is in us, we must be at work. He that is appointed to kill an enemy, if he leave striking before the other

ceases living, doth but half his work; Gal. vi. 9. Heb. xii. 1 2 Cor. vii. 1.

2. Sin doth not only still abide in us, but is still acting, still labouring to bring forth the deeds of the flesh; when sin lets us alone, we may let sin alone: but as sin is never less quiet, than when it seems to be most quiet; and its waters are for the most part deep, when they are still; so ought our contrivances against it to be vigorous at all times, and in all conditions, even where there is least suspicion. Sin doth not only abide in us, but the law of the 'members is still rebelling against the law of the mind;' Rom. vii. 23. and the spirit that dwells in us lusteth to envy; James iv. 5. It is always in continual work, 'the flesh lusteth against the Spirit;' Gal. v. 17. lust is still tempting and conceiving sin, James i. 14. in every moral action, it is always either inclining to evil, or hindering from that which is good, or disframing the spirit from communion with God, it inclines to evil; 'The evil that I would not, that I do,' saith the apostle, Rom. vii. 19. whence is that? why, 'because in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing;' and it hinders from good; 'the good that I would do, that I do not;' ver. 19. upon the same account, either I do it not, or not as I should; all my holy things being defiled by this sin. 'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, that ye cannot do the things that ye would;' Gal. v. 17. and it unframes our spirit; and thence is called the sin that so 'easily besets us;' Heb. xii. 1. on which account are those grievous complaints that the apostle makes of it, Rom. vii. So that sin is always acting, always conceiving, always seducing and tempting. Who can say that he had ever any thing to do with God, or for God, that indwelling sin had not a hand in the corrupting of what he did? And this trade will it drive more or less all our days. If then sin will be always acting, if we be not always mortifying, we are lost creatures. He that stands still, and suffers his enemies to double blows upon him without resistance, will undoubtedly be conquered in the issue. If sin be subtle, watchful, strong, and always at work in the business of killing our souls, and we be slothful, negligent, foolish, in proceeding to the ruin thereof, can we expect a comfortable event? There is not a day but sin foils, or is foiled; prevails or is prevailed on: and it will be so whilst we live in this world.

I shall discharge him from this duty, who can bring sin to a composition, to a cessation of arms in this warfare, if it will spare him any one day, in any one duty (provided he be a person that is acquainted with the spirituality of obedience and the subtlety of sin), let him say to his soul, as to this duty; Soul, take thy rest. The saints whose souls breathe after deliverance from its perplexing rebellion, know there is no safety against it, but in a constant warfare.

3. Sin will not only be striving, acting, rebelling, troubling, disquieting, but if let alone, if not continually mortified, it will bring forth great, cursed, scandalous, soul-destroying sins. The apostle tells us what the works and fruits of it are, Gal. v. 19—21. 'The works of the flesh are manifest, which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revilings, and such like.' You know what it did in David, and sundry others. Sin aims always at the utmost: every time it rises up to tempt or entice, might it have its own course, it would go out to the utmost sin in that kind. Every unclean thought or glance would be adultery, if it could; every covetous desire would be oppression; every thought of unbelief would be atheism, might it grow to its head. Men may come to that, that sin may not be heard speaking a scandalous word in their hearts; that is, provoking to any great sin with scandal in its mouth; but yet every rise of lust, might it have its course, would come to the height of villany: it is like the grave, that is never satisfied. And herein lies no small share of the deceitfulness of sin, by which it prevails to the hardening of men, and so to their ruin; Heb. iii. 13. it is modest as it were in its first motions and proposals; but having once got footing in the heart by them, it constantly makes good its ground, and presseth on to some farther degrees in the same kind. This new acting and pressing forward, makes the soul take little notice of what an entrance to a falling off from God is already made; it thinks all is indifferent well, if there be no farther progress; and so far as the soul is made insensible of any sin, that is, as to such a cause as the gospel requireth, so far it is hardened: but sin is still pressing forward; and that because it hath no utter relinquishment of God, and opposition to

him; that it proceeds towards its height by degrees making good the ground it hath got by hardness, is not from its nature, but its deceitfulness. Now nothing can prevent this, but mortification; that withers the root and strikes at the head of sin every hour; that whatever it aims at, it is crossed in. There is not the best saint in the world, but if he should give over this duty, would fall into as many cursed sins as ever any did of his kind.

4. This is one main reason why the Spirit and the new nature is given unto us, that we may have a principle within, whereby to oppose sin and lust. 'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit:' well! and what then? 'why the Spirit also lusteth against the flesh;' Gal. v. 17. There is a propensity in the Spirit, or spiritual new nature, to be acting against the flesh, as well as in the flesh to be acting against the Spirit: so 2 Pet i. 4, 5. It is our participation of the divine nature, that gives us an escape from the pollutions that are in the world through lust: and Rom vii. 23. there is a law of the mind, as well as a law of the members. Now this is, first, the most unjust, and unreasonable thing in the world; when two combatants are engaged, to bind one, and keep him up from doing his utmost, and to leave the other at liberty to wound him at his pleasure. And, secondly, the foolisheth thing in the world, to bind him who fights for our eternal condition, and to let him alone who seeks and violently attempts our everlasting ruin. The contest is for our lives and souls. Not to be daily employing the Spirit and new nature, for the mortifying of sin, is to neglect that excellent succour, which God hath given us against our greatest enemy. If we neglect to make use of what we have received, God may justly hold his hand from giving us more. His graces, as well as his gifts, are bestowed on us, to use, exercise, and trade with. Not to be daily mortifying sin, is to sin against the goodness, kindness, wisdom, grace, and love of God, who hath furnished us with a principle of doing it.

5. Negligence in this duty, casts the soul into a perfect contrary condition to that which the apostle affirms was his; 2 Cor. iv. 16. 'Though our outward man perish, our inward man is renewed day by day.' In these the inward man perisheth, and the outward man is renewed day by day. Sin is as the house of David, and grace as the house of Saul. Exercise and

success are the two main cherishers of grace in the heart; when it is suffered to lie still, it withers and decays; the things of it are ready to die, Rev. iii. 2. and sin gets ground towards the hardening of the heart; Heb. iii. 13. This is that which I intend, by the omission of this duty, grace withers, lust flourisheth, and the frame of the heart grows worse and worse; and the Lord knows what desperate and fearful issues it hath had with many. Where sin, through the neglect of mortification gets a considerable victory, it breaks the bones of the soul, Psal. xxxi. 10. li. 8. and makes a man weak, sick, and ready to die, Psal. xxxviii. 3—5. that he cannot look up; Psal. xl. 12. Isa. xxxiii. 24. and when poor creatures will take blow after blow, wound after wound, foil after foil, and never rouse up themselves to a vigorous opposition, can they expect any thing but to be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, and that their souls should bleed to death? 2 John 8. Indeed it is a sad thing to consider the fearful issues of this neglect, which lie under our eyes every day. See we not those, whom we knew humble, melting, broken hearted Christians, tender and fearful to offend, zealous for God, and all his ways, his sabbaths, and ordinances, grown through a neglect of watching unto this duty, earthly, carnal, cold, wrathful, complying with the men of the world, and things of the world, to the scandal of religion, and the fearful temptation of them that know them? The truth is, what between placing mortification in a rigid stubborn frame of spirit, which is for the most part, earthly, legal, censorious, partial, consistent with wrath, envy, malice, pride, on the one hand, and pretences of liberty, grace, and I know not what on the other, true evangelical mortification is almost lost amongst us, of which afterward.

6. It is our duty to be perfecting holiness in the 'fear of the Lord;' 2 Cor. vii. 1. to be growing in grace every day, 1 Pet. ii. 2. 2 Pet. iii. 18. to be renewing our inward man day by day; 2 Cor. iv. 16. Now this cannot be done without the daily mortifying of sin: sin sets its strength against every act of holiness, and against every degree we grow to. Let not that man think he makes any progress in holiness, who walks not over the bellies of his lusts; he who doth not kill sin in his way, takes no steps towards his journey's end. He who finds not opposition from it, and who sets not him

who would be accounted religious, and yet despise gospel light, and for the duty we have in hand, know no more of it, but what consists in men's denying themselves sometimes in outward enjoyments, which is one of the outmost branches of it, which yet they will seldom practise. The good Lord send out a spirit of mortification to cure our distempers, or we are in a sad condition.

There are two evils which certainly attend every unmortified professor; the first in himself, the other in respect of others.

(1.) In himself. Let him pretend what he will, he hath slight thoughts of sin; at least of sins of daily infirmity. The root of an unmortified course, is the digestion of sin without bitterness in the heart. When a man hath confirmed his imagination to such an apprehension of grace and mercy, as to be able without bitterness to swallow and digest daily sins, that man is at the very brink of turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Neither is there a greater evidence of a false and rotten heart in the world, than to drive such a trade. To use the blood of Christ, which is given to cleanse us; 1 John i. 7. Tit. ii. 14. the exaltation of Christ, which is to give us repentance; Acts v. 31. the doctrine of grace, which teaches us to deny all ungodliness; Tit. ii. 11, 12. to countenance sin is a rebellion, that in the issue will break the bones. At this door have gone out from us, most of the professors that have apostatized in the days wherein we live, for awhile they were most of them under convictions; these kept them unto duties, and brought them to profession. So they 'escaped the pollutions that are in the world, through the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ;' 2 Pet. ii. 20. But having got an acquaintance with the doctrine of the gospel, and being weary of duty, for which they had no principle, they began to countenance themselves in manifold neglects, from the doctrine of grace. Now when once this evil had laid hold of them, they speedily tumbled into perdition.

(2.) To others. It hath an evil influence on them, on a twofold account.

[1.] It hardens them, by begetting in them a persuasion that they are in as good condition as the best professors.

Whatever they see in them, is so stained for want of this mortification, that it is of no value with them; they have a zeal for religion, but it is accompanied with want of forbearance, and universal righteousness. They deny prodigality, but with worldliness; they separate from the world, but live wholly to themselves, taking no care to exercise loving-kindness in the earth; or they talk spiritually, and live vainly; mention communion with God, and are every way conformed to the world, boasting of forgiveness of sin, and never forgiving others; and with such considerations do poor creatures harden their hearts in their unregeneracy.

[2.] They deceive them in making them believe, that if they can come up to their condition, it shall be well with them: and so it grows an easy thing, to have the great temptation of repute in religion to wrestle withal; when they may go far beyond them, as to what appears in them, and yet come short of eternal life; but of these things, and all the evils of unmortified walking, afterward.

CHAP. III.

The second general principle of the means of mortification proposed to confirmation. The Spirit the only author of this work. Vanity of Popish mortification discovered. Many means of it used by them not appointed of God. Those appointed by him abused. The mistakes of others in this business. The Spirit is promised believers for this work; Ezek. i. 19. xxxvi. 26, *All that we receive from Christ, is by the Spirit. How the Spirit mortifies sin;* Gal. v. 19—23. *The several ways of his operations to this end proposed. How his work, and our duty.*

THE next principle relates to the great sovereign cause of the mortification treated of, which, in the words laid for the foundation of this discourse, is said to be the Spirit; that is, the Holy Ghost, as was evinced.

He only is sufficient for this work; all ways and means without him are as a thing of nought; and he is the great efficient of it, he works in us as he pleases.

1. In vain do men seek other remedies, they shall not be healed by them. What several ways have been prescribed for this, to have sin mortified is known. The greatest part of Popish religion, of that which looks most like religion in

their profession, consists in mistaken ways and means of mortification. This is the pretence of their rough garments, whereby they deceive. Their vows, orders, fastings, penances, are all built on this ground, they are all for the mortifying of sin. Their preachings, sermons, and books of devotion, they look all this way. Hence those who interpret the locusts that came out of the bottomless pit, Rev. ix. 2. to be the friars of the Romish church, who are said to torment men, so 'that they should seek death and not find it,' ver. 6. think, that they did it by their stinging sermons, whereby they convinced them of sin, but being not able to discover the remedy for the healing and mortifying of it, they keep them in such perpetual anguish and terror, and such trouble in their consciences, that they desired to die. This I say is the substance and glory of their religion: but what with their labouring to mortify dead creatures, ignorant of the nature and end of the work, what with the poison they mixed with it, in their persuasion of its merit, yea, supererogation, (as they style their unnecessary merit, with a proud barbarous title) their glory is their shame; but of them and their mortification, more afterward: chap. viii.

That the ways and means to be used for the mortification of sin invented by them, are still insisted on and prescribed for the same end by some, who should have more light and knowledge of the gospel, is known. Such directions to this purpose have of late been given by some, and are greedily catched at by others professing themselves Protestants, as might have become Popish devotionists three or four hundred years ago. Such outside endeavours, such bodily exercises, such self-performances, such merely legal duties, without the least mention of Christ, or his Spirit, are varnished over with swelling words of vanity, for the only means and expedients for the mortification of sin, as discover a deep-rooted unacquaintedness with the power of God, and mystery of the gospel. The consideration hereof was one motive to the publishing of this plain discourse.

Now the reasons why the Papists can never with all their endeavours truly mortify any one sin, amongst others, are,

(1.) Because many of the ways and means they use and insist upon, for this end, were never appointed of God for

that purpose. Now there is nothing in religion that hath any efficacy for compassing an end, but it hath it from God's appointment of it to that purpose. Such as these are their rough garments, their vows, penances, disciplines, their course of monastical life, and the like, concerning all which God will say, 'Who hath required these things at your hands?' And 'In vain do you worship me, teaching for doctrine the traditions of men.' Of the same nature are sundry self-vexations, insisted on by others.

(2.) Because those things that are appointed of God as means, are not used by them in their due place and order; such as are praying, fasting, watching, meditation, and the like; these have their use in the business in hand. But whereas they are all to be looked on as streams, they look on them as the fountain. Whereas they effect and accomplish the end, as means only subordinate to the Spirit and faith, they look on them to do it by virtue of the work wrought. If they fast so much, and pray so much, and keep their hours and times, the work is done; as the apostle says of some in another case, they are always learning, never coming to the knowledge of the truth; so they are always mortifying, but never come to any sound mortification. In a word, they have sundry means to mortify the natural man, as to the natural life here we lead; none to mortify lust or corruption.

This is the general mistake of men ignorant of the gospel about this thing; and it lies at the bottom of very much of that superstition and will-worship that hath been brought into the world. What horrible self macerations were practised by some of the ancient authors of monastical devotion? what violence did they offer to nature? what extremity of sufferings did they put themselves upon? search their ways and principles to the bottom, and you will find, that it had no other root but this mistake; namely, that attempting rigid mortification they fell upon the natural man, instead of the corrupt old man; upon the body wherein we live, instead of the body of death.

Neither will the natural Popery that is in others do it. Men are galled with the guilt of a sin that hath prevailed over them; they instantly promise to themselves and God, that they will do so no more; they watch over themselves,

and pray for a season, until this heat waxes cold, and the sense of sin is worn off, and so mortification goes also, and sin returns to its former dominion: duties are excellent food for an healthy soul; they are no physic for a sick soul. He that turns his meat into his medicine, must expect no great operation. Spiritually sick men cannot sweat out their distemper with working. But this is the way of men who deceive their own souls, as we shall see afterward.

That none of these ways are sufficient, is evident from the nature of the work itself that is to be done; it is a work that requires so many concurrent actings in it as no self-endeavour can reach unto, and is of that kind, that an Almighty energy is necessary for its accomplishment, as shall be afterward manifested.

2. It is then the work of the Spirit. For

(1.) He is promised of God to be given unto us to do this work; the taking away of the stony heart, that is, the stubborn, proud, rebellious, unbelieving heart, is in general the work of mortification that we treat of. Now this is still promised to be done by the Spirit; Ezek. xi. 19. xxxvi. 26. 'I will give my Spirit, and take away the stony heart;' and by the Spirit of God is this work wrought, when all means fail; Isa. lvii. 17, 18.

(2.) We have all our mortification from the gift of Christ, and all the gifts of Christ are communicated to us, and given us by the Spirit of Christ. 'Without Christ we can do nothing;' John xv. 5. all communications of supplies and relief in the beginnings, increasings, actings, of any grace whatever from him, are by the Spirit, by whom he alone works in, and upon believers. From him we have our mortification; 'He is exalted and made a prince, and a Saviour, to give repentance unto us; Acts v. 31. and of our repentance our mortification is no small portion. How doth he do it? Having received the promise of the Holy Ghost, he sends him abroad for that end; Acts ii. 33. you know the manifold promises he made of sending the Spirit, as Tertullian speaks, 'Vicariam navare operam,' to do the works that he had to accomplish in us.

The resolution of one or two questions, will now lead me nearer to what I principally intend.

How doth the Spirit mortify sin?

I answer, in general, three ways.

[1.] By causing our hearts to abound in grace and the fruits that are contrary to the flesh, and the fruits thereof, and principles of them. So the apostle opposes the fruits of the flesh, and of the Spirit: the fruits of the flesh, says he, are so and so; Gal. v. 19, 20. but, says he, the fruits of the Spirit are quite contrary, quite of another sort; ver. 22, 23. yea, but what if these are in us, and do abound, may not the other abound also? No, says he, ver. 24. 'They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts:' but how? why, ver. 25, 'By living in the Spirit, and walking after the Spirit,' that is, by the abounding of these graces of the Spirit in us, and walking according to them. For, saith the apostle, these are 'contrary one to another,' ver. 17. so that they cannot both be in the same subject, in any intense or high degree. This 'renewing of us by the Holy Ghost,' as it is called, Tit. iii. 5. is one great way of mortification; he causes us to grow, thrive, flourish, and abound, in those graces which are contrary, opposite, and destructive, to all the fruits of the flesh, and to the quiet or thriving of indwelling sin itself.

[2.] By a real, physical efficiency on the root and habit of sin, for the weakening, destroying, and taking it away. Hence he is called a 'Spirit of judgment and burning;' Isa. iv. 4. really consuming and destroying our lusts. He takes away the stony heart by an almighty efficiency; for as he begins the work as to its kind, so he carries it on as to its degrees. He is the fire which burns up the very root of lust.

[3.] He brings the cross of Christ into the heart of a sinner by faith, and gives us communion with Christ in his death, and fellowship in his sufferings; of the manner whereof more afterward.

If this be the work of the Spirit alone, how is it that we are exhorted to it? Seeing the Spirit of God only can do it, let the work be left wholly to him.

[1.] It is no otherwise the work of the Spirit, but as all graces and good works, which are in us, are his; he works in us to 'will and to do of his own good pleasure;' Phil. ii. 13. works all 'our works in us;' Isa. xxvi. 12. 'the work of faith with power;' 2 Thess. i. 11. Col. ii. 12. He causes us

to pray, and is a Spirit of supplication; Rom. viii. 26. Zech. xii. 10. and yet we are exhorted, and are to be exhorted, to all these.

[2.] He doth not so work our mortification in us, as not to keep it still an act of our obedience. The Holy Ghost works in us, and upon us, as we are fit to be wrought in, and upon; that is, so as to preserve our own liberty and free obedience. He works upon our understandings, wills, consciences, and affections, agreeably to their own natures; he works in us, and with us, not against us, or without us; so that his assistance is an encouragement, as to the facilitating of the work, and no occasion of neglect, as to the work itself. And indeed I might here bewail the endless, foolish labour of poor souls, who, being convinced of sin, and not able to stand against the power of their convictions, do set themselves by innumerable perplexing ways and duties to keep down sin, but being strangers to the Spirit of God, all in vain. They combat without victory, have war without peace, and are in slavery all their days. They spend their strength for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which profiteth not.

This is the saddest warfare that any poor creature can be engaged in. A soul under the power of conviction from the law, is pressed to fight against sin, but hath no strength for the combat. They cannot but fight, and they can never conquer, they are like men thrust on the sword of enemies, on purpose to be slain. The law drives them on, and sin beats them back. Sometimes they think indeed that they have foiled sin; when they have only raised a dust that they see it not; that is they distemper their natural affections of fear, sorrow, and anguish, which makes them believe that sin is conquered, when it is not touched. By that time they are cold, they must to the battle again; and the lust which they thought to be slain, appears to have had no wound.

And if the case be so sad with them who do labour and strive, and yet enter not into the kingdom; what is their condition who despise all this? who are perpetually under the power and dominion of sin, and love to have it so; and are troubled at nothing, but that they cannot make sufficient provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof?

of the soul, that should be full of God, will be one way or other entangled with it.

2. It fills the thoughts with contrivances about it. Thoughts are the great purveyors of the soul, to bring in provision to satisfy its affections; and if sin remain unmortified in the heart, they must ever and anon be making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. They must glaze, adorn, and dress the objects of the flesh, and bring them home to give satisfaction. And this they are able to do, in the service of a defiled imagination, beyond all expression.

3. It breaks out and actually hinders duty. The ambitious man must by studying, and the worldling must be working or contriving, and the sensual vain person providing himself for vanity, when they should be engaged in the worship of God.

Were this my present business, to set forth the breaches, ruin, weakness, desolations, that one unmortified lust will bring upon a soul, this discourse must be extended much beyond my intendment.

[2.] As sin weakens, so it darkens the soul. It is a cloud, a thick cloud, that spreads itself over the face of the soul, and intercepts all the beams of God's love and favour. It takes away all sense of the privilege of our adoption; and if the soul begins to gather up thoughts of consolation, sin quickly scatters them. Of which afterward.

Now in this regard doth the vigour and power of our spiritual life depend on our mortification. It is the only means of the removal of that, which will allow us neither the one nor the other. Men that are sick and wounded under the power of lust, make many applications for help; they cry to God when the perplexity of their thoughts overwhelms them; even to God do they cry, but are not delivered; in vain do they use many remedies, 'they shall not be healed;' so Hos. v. 13. 'Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his wound,' and attempted sundry remedies; nothing will do until they come, ver. 15. to acknowledge their offence. Men may see their sickness and wounds, but yet, if they make not due applications, their cure will not be affected.

(2.) Mortification prunes all the graces of God, and makes room for them in our hearts to grow. The life and

vigour of our spiritual lives consists in the vigour and flourishing of the plants of grace in our hearts. Now as you may see in a garden, let there be a precious herb planted, and let the ground be untilled, and weeds grow about it, perhaps it will live still, but be a poor, withering, unuseful thing; you must look and search for it, and sometimes can scarce find it; and when you do, you can scarce know it, whether it be the plant you look for or no; and suppose it be you can make no use of it at all; when let another of the same kind be set in ground, naturally as barren and bad as the other; but let it be well weeded, and every thing that is noxious and hurtful removed from it, it flourishes and thrives; you may see it at first look into the garden, and have it for your use when you please. So it is with the graces of the Spirit that are planted in our hearts. That is true; they are still, they abide in a heart where there is some neglect of mortification; but they are ready to die; Rev. iii. 2. they are withering and decaying. The heart is like the sluggards field, so overgrown with weeds, that you can scarce see the good corn. Such a man may search for faith, love, and zeal, and scarce be able to find any; and if he do discover that these graces are there, yet alive, and sincere; yet they are so weak, so clogged with lusts, that they are of very little use; they remain indeed, but are ready to die. But now let the heart be cleansed by mortification, the weeds of lust constantly and daily rooted up (as they spring daily, nature being their proper soil), let room be made for grace to thrive and flourish; how will every grace act its part, and be ready for every use and purpose.

(3.) As to our peace; as their is nothing that hath any evidence of sincerity without it, so I know nothing that hath such an evidence of sincerity in it; which is no small foundation of our peace. Mortification is the soul's vigorous opposition to self, wherein sincerity is most evident.

CHAP. V.

The principal intendment of the whole discourse proposed. The first main case of conscience stated. What it is to mortify any sin, negatively considered. Not the utter destruction of it in this life. Not the dissimulation of it. Not the improvement of any natural principle. Not the diversion of it. Not an occasional conquest. Occasional conquests of sin, what, and when. Upon the eruption of sin. In time of danger or trouble.

THESE things being premised, I come to my principal intention, of handling some questions or practical cases that present themselves in this business of mortification of sin in believers.

The first, which is the head of all the rest, and whereunto they are reduced, may be considered as laying under the ensuing proposal.

Suppose a man to be a true believer, and yet finds in himself a powerful indwelling sin, leading him captive to the law of it, consuming his heart with trouble, perplexing his thoughts, weakening his soul, as to duties of communion with God, disquieting him as to peace, and perhaps defiling his conscience, and exposing him to hardening through the deceitfulness of sin, what shall he do? What course shall he take and insist on, for the mortification of this sin, lust, distemper, or corruption, to such a degree, as that though it be not utterly destroyed, yet, in his contest with it, he may be enabled to keep up power, strength, and peace, in communion with God?

In answer to this important inquiry, I shall do these things,

I. Shew what it is to mortify any sin; and that both negatively and positively, that we be not mistaken in the foundation.

II. Give general directions for such things, as without which it will be utterly impossible for any one to get any sin truly and spiritually mortified.

III. Draw out the particulars whereby this is to be done: in the whole carrying on this consideration, that it is not of the doctrine of mortification in general, but only in re-

ference to the particular case before proposed, that I am treating.

1. To mortify a sin, is not utterly to kill, root it out, and destroy it, that it should have no more hold at all, nor residence in our hearts. It is true, this is that which is aimed at, but this is not in this life to be accomplished. There is no man that truly sets himself to mortify any sin, but he aims at, intends, desires its utter destruction; that it should leave neither root nor fruit in the heart or life. He would so kill it, that it should never move or stir any more, cry or call, seduce or tempt, to eternity. Its not being is the thing aimed at. Now though doubtless there may by the Spirit and grace of Christ a wonderful success and eminency of victory against any sin be attained, so that a man may have almost constant triumph over it; yet an utter killing and destruction of it, that it should not be, is not in this life to be expected. This Paul assures us of, Phil. iii. 12. 'Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect.' He was a choice saint, a pattern for believers, who in faith and love, and all the fruits of the Spirit, had not his fellow in the world; and on that account ascribes perfection to himself, in comparison of others, ver. 15. yet he had not attained; he was not perfect, but was following after: still a vile body he had, and we have, that must be changed by the great power of Christ at last; ver. 21. This we would have, but God sees it best for us, that we should be complete in nothing in ourselves; that in all things we must be complete in Christ, which is best for us; Col. ii. 10.

2. I think I need not say, it is not the dissimulation of a sin; when a man on some outward respects forsakes the practice of any sin; men perhaps may look on him as a changed man; God knows that to his former iniquity he hath added cursed hypocrisy, and is got in a safer path to hell, than he was in before. He hath got another heart than he had, that is, more cunning, not a new heart, that is, more holy.

3. The mortification of sin consists not in the improvement of a quiet, sedate nature. Some men have an advantage by their natural constitution, so far, as that they are not exposed to such violence of unruly passions, and tumultuous affections, as many others are. Let now these men

cultivate and improve their natural frame and temper, by discipline, consideration, and prudence, and they may seem to themselves and others, very mortified men, when perhaps their hearts are a standing sink of all abominations; some man is never so much troubled all his life perhaps with anger and passion, nor doth trouble others, as another is almost every day; and yet the latter hath done more to the mortification of the sin than the former. Let not such persons try their mortification by such things, as their natural temper gives no life or vigour to: let them bring themselves to self-denial, unbelief, envy, or some such spiritual sin, and they will have a better view of themselves.

4. A sin is not mortified, when it is only diverted. Simon Magus for a season left his sorceries; but his covetousness and ambition that set him on work, remained still, and would have been acting another way: therefore Peter tells him, 'I perceive thou art in the gall of bitterness;' notwithstanding the profession thou hast made, notwithstanding thy relinquishment of thy sorceries, thy lust is as powerful as ever in thee: the same lust, only the streams of it are diverted: it now exerts and puts forth itself another way, but it is the old gall of bitterness still. A man may be sensible of a lust, set himself against the eruptions of it, take care that it shall not break forth as it hath done; but in the meantime suffer the same corrupted habit to vent itself some other way. As he who heals and skins a running sore, thinks himself cured, but in the meantime his flesh festereth by the corruption of the same humour, and breaks out in another place. And this diversion, with the alterations that attend it, often befalls men, on accounts wholly foreign unto grace; change of the course of life that a man was in; of relations, interests, designs, may effect it; yea, the very alterations in men's constitutions, occasioned by a natural progress in the course of their lives, may produce such changes as these; men in age, do not usually persist in the pursuit of youthful lusts, although they have never mortified any one of them. And the same is the case of bartering of lusts, and leaving to serve one, that a man may serve another. He that changes pride for worldliness, sensuality for pharisaism, vanity in himself to the contempt of others; let him not think that he hath mortified the sin that

he seems to have left. He hath changed his master, but is a servant still.

5. Occasional conquests of sin do not amount to a mortifying of it.

There are two occasions or seasons, wherein a man who is contending with any sin, may seem to himself to have mortified it.

1. When it hath had some sad eruption to the disturbance of his peace, terror of his conscience, dread of scandal, and evident provocation of God. This awakens and stirs up all that is in the man, and amazes him, fills him with abhorrency of sin, and himself for it; sends him to God, makes him cry out as for life, to abhor his lust as hell, and to set himself against it. The whole man, spiritual and natural, being now awaked, sin shrinks in its head, appears not, but lies as dead before him. As when one that hath drawn nigh to an army in the night, and hath killed a principal person; instantly the guards awake, men are roused up, and strict inquiry is made after the enemy: who in the meantime, until the noise and tumult be over, hides himself, or lies like one that is dead, yet with firm resolution to do the like mischief again, upon the like opportunity. Upon the sin among the Corinthians, see how they muster up themselves for the surprisal and destruction of it; 2 Epist. chap. vii. 11. So it is in a person, when a breach hath been made upon his conscience, quiet, perhaps credit, by his lust, in some eruption of actual sin, carefulness, indignation, desire, fear, revenge, are all set on work about it, and against it. And lust is quiet for a season, being run down before them; but when the hurry is over, and the inquest past, the thief appears again alive, and is as busy as ever at his work.

2. In a time of some judgment, calamity, or pressing affliction; the heart is then taken up with thoughts and contrivances of flying from the present troubles, fears, and dangers: this, as a convinced person concludes, is to be done, only by relinquishment of sin, which gains peace with God. It is the anger of God in every affliction that galls a convinced person. To be quit of this, men resolve at such times against their sins. Sin shall never more have any place in them; they will never again give up themselves to the service of it. Accordingly sin is quiet, stirs not, seems to be

mortified; not indeed that it hath received any one wound, but merely because the soul hath possessed its faculties, whereby it should exert itself, with thoughts inconsistent with the motions thereof; which, when they are laid aside, sin returns again to its former life and vigour. So they, Psal. lxxviii. 32—38. are a full instance and description of this frame of spirit, whereof I speak. 'For all this they sinned still and believed not for his wondrous works. Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble. When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned, and inquired early after God. And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer. Nevertheless, they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant.' I no way doubt, but that when they sought, and returned, and inquired early after God, they did it with full purpose of heart, as to the relinquishment of their sins; it is expressed in the word 'returned.' To turn or return to the Lord, is by a relinquishment of sin. This they did early, with earnestness and diligence; but yet their sin was unmortified for all this; ver. 36, 37. and this is the state of many humiliations in the days of affliction, and a great deceit in the hearts of believers themselves, lies oftentimes herein.

These, and many other ways there are, whereby poor souls deceive themselves, and suppose they have mortified their lusts, when they live and are mighty, and on every occasion break forth to their disturbance and disquietness.

CHAP. VI.

The mortification of sin in particular described. The several parts and degrees thereof. The habitual weakening of its root and principal. The power of lust to tempt. Differences of that power as to persons and times. Constant fighting against sin. The parts thereof considered. Success against it. The sum of this discourse considered.

WHAT it is to mortify a sin in general which will make farther way for particular directions, is nextly to be considered.

The mortification of a lust consists in three things.

1. An habitual weakening of it. Every lust is a depraved habit or disposition, continually inclining the heart to evil. Thence is that description of him, who hath no lust truly mortified; Gen. vi. 5. 'Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually.' He is always under the power of a strong bent and inclination to sin. And the reason why a natural man is not always, perpetually, in the pursuit of some one lust night and day, is, because he hath many to serve, every one crying to be satisfied; thence he is carried on with great variety, but still in general he lies towards the satisfaction of self.

We will suppose then the lust or distemper, whose mortification is inquired after, to be in itself a strong, deeply rooted, habitual inclination and bent of will and affections, unto some actual sin, as to the matter of it, though not under that formal consideration, always stirring up imaginations, thoughts, and contrivances about the object of it. Hence men are said to have their hearts set upon evil, the bent of their spirits lies towards it, to make provision for the flesh.[a] And a sinful depraved habit, as in many other things, so in this, differs from all natural or moral habits whatever; for whereas they incline the soul gently and suitably to itself, sinful habits impel with violence and impetuousness: whence lusts are said to fight or wage war against the soul;[b] 1 Pet. ii. 11. to rebel, or rise up in war with that conduct and opposition which is usual therein;[c] Rom. vii. 23. to lead captive, or effectually captivating upon success in battle: all works of great violence and impetuousness.

I might manifest fully from that description we have of it, Rom. vii. how it will darken the mind, extinguish convictions, dethrone reason; interrupt the power and influence of any considerations, that may be brought to hamper it, and break through all into a flame. But this is not my present business. Now the first thing in mortification is the weakening of this habit of sin or lust, that it shall not with that violence, earnestness, frequency, rise up, conceive, tumultuate, provoke, entice, disquiet, as naturally it is apt to do; James i. 14, 15.

I shall desire to give one caution or rule by the way;

[a] Rom. xiii. 14.

[b] Στρατεύονται κατὰ τῆς ψυχῆς. [c] Ἀντιστρατευόμενον αἰχμαλωτίζοντά.

and it is this. Though every lust doth in its own nature, equally, universally incline and impel to sin, yet this must be granted with these two limitations.

(1.) One lust, or a lust in one man, may receive many accidental improvements, heightenings, and strengthenings, which may give it life, power, and vigour, exceedingly above what another lust hath, or the same lust, that is of the same kind and nature, in another man. When a lust falls in with the natural constitutions and temper, with a suitable course of life, with occasions; or when Satan hath got a fit handle to it to manage it, as he hath a thousand ways so to do; that lust grows violent and impetuous above others, or more than the same lust in another man; then the steams of it darken the mind so, that though a man knows the same things as formerly, yet they have no power nor influence on the will, but corrupt affections and passions are set by it at liberty.

But especially, lust gets strength by temptation: when a suitable temptation falls in with a lust, it gives it a new life, vigour, power, violence, and rage, which it seemed not before to have, or to be capable of. Instances to this purpose might be multiplied; but it is the design of some part of another treatise to evince this observation.

(2.) Some lusts are far more sensible and discernable in their violent actings than others. Paul puts a difference between uncleanness and all other sins; 1 Cor. vi. 18. 'Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doth, is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.' Hence the motions of that sin are more sensible, more discernable than of others; when perhaps, the love of the world, or the like, is in a person no less habitually predominant than that, yet it makes not so great a combustion in the whole man.

And on this account some men may go in their own thoughts and in the eyes of the world, for mortified men; who yet have in them no less predominancy of lust, than those who cry out with astonishment upon the account of its perplexing tumultuatings. Yea then those who have by the power of it, been hurried into scandalous sins; only their lusts are in and about things, which raise not such a tumult in the soul, about which they are exercised with a

calmer frame of spirit; the very fabrick of nature being not so nearly concerned in them, as in some other.

I say, then, that the first thing in mortification is the weakening of this habit, that it shall not impel and tumultuate as formerly, that it shall not entice and draw aside, that it shall not disquiet and perplex the killing of its life, vigour, promptness, and readiness to be stirring. This is called 'crucifying the flesh with the lusts thereof;' Gal. v. 24. that is, taking away its blood and spirits, that give it strength and power. The wasting of the body of death day by day; 2 Cor. iv. 16. As a man nailed to the cross; he first struggles, and strives, and cries out with great strength and might; but as his blood and spirits waste, his strivings are faint and seldom, his cries low and hoarse, scarce to be heard. When a man first sets on a lust or distemper, to deal with it, it struggles with great violence to break loose; it cries with earnestness and impatience to be satisfied and relieved; but when by mortification the blood and spirits of it are let out, it moves seldom and faintly, cries sparingly, and is scarce heard in the heart; it may have sometimes a dying pang, that makes an appearance of great vigour and strength, but it is quickly over, especially if it be kept from considerable success. This the apostle describes as in the whole chapter, so especially ver. 6. chap. vi. to the Romans. Sin, saith he, is crucified; it is fastened to the cross; to what end? 'that the body of death may be destroyed;' the power of sin weakened, and abolished by little and little; that 'henceforth we should not serve sin;' that is, that sin might not incline, impel us with such efficacy, as to make us servants to it, as it hath done heretofore. And this is spoken not only with respect to carnal and sensual affections, or desires of worldly things; not only in respect of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, but also as to the flesh, that is in the mind and will, in that opposition unto God, which is in us by nature. Of what nature soever the troubling distemper be, by what ways soever it make itself out, either by impelling to evil or hindering from that which is good, the rule is the same. And unless this be done effectually, all after contention will not compass the end aimed at. A man may beat down the bitter fruit from an evil tree, until he is weary; whilst the root abide

strength and vigour, the beating down of the present fruit will not hinder it from bringing forth more; this is the folly of some men; they set themselves with all earnestness and diligence against the appearing eruption of lust; but leaving the principle and root untouched, perhaps unsearched out, they make but little or no progress in this work of mortification.

2. In constant fighting and contending against sin. To be able always to be laying load on sin, is no small degree of mortification. When sin is strong and vigorous, the soul is scarce able to make any head against it: it sighs, and groans, and mourns, and is troubled, as David speaks of himself, but seldom has sin in the pursuit; David complains that his sin had taken 'fast hold upon him, that he could not look up;' Psal. xl. 12. how little then was he able to fight against it? Now sundry things are required unto, and comprised in this fighting against sin.

(1.) To know that a man hath such an enemy to deal withal; to take notice of it, to consider it as an enemy indeed, and one that is to be destroyed by all means possible, is required hereunto. As I said before, the contest is vigorous and hazardous; it is about the things of eternity. When therefore men have slight and transient thoughts of their lusts, it is no great sign that they are mortified, or that they are in a way for their mortification. This is, every man's knowing 'the plague of his own heart;' 1 Kings viii. 38. without which no other work can be done. It is to be feared that very many have little knowledge of the main enemy, that they carry about them in their bosoms. This makes them ready to justify themselves, and to be impatient of reproof or admonition, not knowing that they are in any danger; 2 Chron. xvi. 10.

(2.) To labour to be acquainted with the ways, wills, methods, advantages, and occasions of its success, is the beginning of this warfare. So do men deal with enemies. They inquire out their councils and designs, ponder their ends, consider how and by what means they have formerly prevailed, that they may be prevented; in this consists the greatest skill in conduct. Take this away, and all waging of war, wherein is the greatest improvement of human wisdom and industry, would be brutish. So do they deal

with lust, who mortify it indeed; not only when it is actually vexing, enticing, and seducing; but in their retirements they consider, this is our enemy, this is his way and progress, these are his advantages, thus hath he prevailed, and thus he will do, if not prevented. So David, 'My sin is ever before me;' Psal. li. 3.

(3.) To load it daily with all the things which shall after be mentioned, that are grievous, killing, and destructive to it, is the height of this contest; such a one never thinks his lust dead, because it is quiet, but labours still to give it new wounds, new blows every day. So the apostle; Col. iii. 5.

Now whilst the soul is in this condition, whilst it is thus dealing, it is certainly uppermost, sin is under the sword and dying.

3. In success; frequent success against any lust, is another part and evidence of mortification. By success I understand not a mere disappointment of sin, that it be not brought forth, nor accomplished; but a victory over it, and pursuit of it to a complete conquest: for instance, when the heart finds sin at any time at work, seducing, forming imaginations to make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof, it instantly apprehends sin, and brings it to the law of God, and love of Christ; condemns it, follows it with execution to the uttermost. Now, I say, when a man comes to this state and condition, that lust is weakened in the root and principle, that its motions and actions are fewer and weaker than formerly, so that they are not able to hinder his duty, nor interrupt his peace, when he can in a quiet, sedate frame of spirit, find out, and fight against sin, and have success against it, then sin is mortified in some considerable measure; and notwithstanding all its opposition, a man may have peace with God all his days.

Unto these heads then do I refer the mortification aimed at; that is, of any one perplexing distemper, whereby the general pravity and corruption of our nature attempts to exert and put forth itself.

1. First, the weakening of its indwelling disposition, whereby it inclines, entices, impels to evil, rebels, opposes, fights against God, by the implanting, habitual residence, and cherishing of a principle of grace, that stands in direct opposition to it, and is destructive of it, is the foundation of

it. So by the implanting and growth of humility is pride weakened, passion by patience, uncleanness by purity of mind and conscience, love of this world by heavenly-mindedness, which are graces of the Spirit, or the same habitual grace variously acting itself by the Holy Ghost, according to the variety or diversity of the objects about which it is exercised; as the other are several lusts, or the same natural corruption variously acting itself according to the various advantages and occasions that it meets withal.

2. The promptness, alacrity, vigour of the spirit, or new man in contending with, cheerful fighting against the lust spoken of, by all the ways, and with all the means that are appointed thereunto, constantly using the succours provided against its motions and actings, is a second thing hereunto required.

3. Success unto several degrees attends these two. Now this, if the distemper hath not an unconquerable advantage from its natural situation, may possibly be to such a universal conquest, as the soul may never more sensibly feel its opposition, and shall however assuredly raise to an allowance of peace to the conscience, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace.

CHAP. VII.

General rules, without which no lust will be mortified. No mortification unless a man be a believer. Dangers of attempting mortification of sin by unregenerate persons. The duty of unconverted persons, as to this business of mortification, considered. The vanity of the Papists' attempts, and rules for mortification thence discovered.

THE ways and means, whereby a soul may proceed to the mortification of any particular lust and sin, which Satan takes advantage by, to disquiet and weaken him, comes next under consideration.

Now there are some general considerations to be premised concerning some principles and foundations of this work, without which no man in the world, be he never so aised by convictions, and resolved for the mortification in, can attain thereunto.

General rules and principles, without which no sin will be ever mortified, are these:

1. Unless a man be a believer, that is, one that is truly ingrafted into Christ, he can never mortify any one sin; I do not say, unless he know himself to be so, but unless indeed he be so.

Mortification is the work of believers; Rom. viii. 13. 'If ye through the Spirit,' &c. Ye believers, to whom there is no condemnation; ver. 1. They alone are exhorted to it. Col. iii. 5. 'Mortify therefore your members that are upon the earth.' Who should mortify? You who 'are risen with Christ;' ver. 1. 'whose life is hid with Christ in God; ver. 3. who 'shall appear with him in glory;' ver. 4. An unregenerate man may do something like it, but the work itself, so as it may be acceptable with God, he can never perform. You know what a picture of it is drawn in some of the philosophers, Seneca, Tully, Epictetus; what affectionate discourses they have of contempt of the world and self, of regulating and conquering all exorbitant affections and passions. The lives of most of them manifested, that their maxims differed as much from true mortification, as the sun painted on a sign-post, from the sun in the firmament; they had neither light nor heat. Their own Lucian sufficiently manifests what they all were. There is no death of sin, without the death of Christ. You know what attempts there are made after it, by the Papists, in their vows, penances, and satisfactions; I dare say of them (I mean as many of them as act upon the principles of their church, as they call it) what Paul says of Israel in point of righteousness; Rom. ix. 31, 32. they have followed after mortification, but they have not attained to it; wherefore? Because they 'seek it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.' The same is the state and condition of all amongst ourselves, who in obedience to their convictions, and awakened consciences, do attempt a relinquishment of sin; they follow after it, but they do not attain it.

It is true, it is, it will be required of every person whatever, that hears the law or gospel preached, that he mortify sin; it is his duty, but it is not his immediate duty. It is his duty to do it, but to do it in God's way. If you requi your servant to pay so much money for you in such a pl

but first to go and take it up in another; it is his duty to pay the money appointed, and you will blame him if he do it not; yet it was not his immediate duty; he was first to take it up, according to your direction. So it is in this case: sin is to be mortified, but something is to be done in the first place to enable us thereunto.

I have proved that it is the Spirit alone that can mortify sin; he is promised to do it, and all other means without him are empty and vain. How shall he then mortify sin, that hath not the Spirit? A man may easier see without eyes, speak without a tongue, than truly mortify one sin without the Spirit. Now how is he attained? It is the Spirit of Christ, and as the apostle says, 'If we have not the Spirit of Christ, we are none of his;' Rom. viii. 9. So, if we are Christ's, have an interest in him, we have the Spirit, and so alone have power for mortification. This the apostle discourses at large; Rom. viii. 8. 'So that they that are in the flesh cannot please God.' It is the inference and conclusion he makes of his foregoing discourse about our natural state and condition, and the enmity we have unto God and his law therein. If we are in the flesh, if we have not the Spirit, we cannot do any thing that should please God. But what is our deliverance from this condition? ver. 9. 'But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you:' ye believers, that have the Spirit of Christ, ye are not in the flesh. There is no way of deliverance from the state and condition of being in the flesh, but by the Spirit of Christ; and what if this Spirit of Christ be in you? why then you are mortified; ver. 10. 'the body is dead because of sin,' or unto it: mortification is carried on; the new man is quickened to righteousness. This the apostle proves, ver. 11. from the union we have with Christ by the Spirit, which will produce suitable operations in us, to what it wrought in him. All attempts, then, for mortification of any lust, without an interest in Christ, are vain. Many men that are galled with, and for sin, the arrows of Christ for conviction, by the preaching of the word, or some aving been made sharp in their hearts, do vigour- emselves against this or that particular lust, eir consciences have been most disquieted, or it poor creatures! they labour in the fire, and

their work consumeth. When the Spirit of Christ comes to this work, he will be as refiner's fire, and as fuller's soap, and he will purge men as gold and as silver; Mal. iii. 3. take away their dross and tin, their filth and blood, as Isa. iv. 3. but men must be gold and silver in the bottom, or else refining will do them no good. The prophet gives us the sad issue of wicked men's utmost attempts for mortification, by what means soever that God affords them; Jer. vi. 29, 30. 'The bellows are burnt, and the lead is consumed of the fire, the founder melteth in vain, reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them.' And what is the reason hereof? ver. 28. they were brass and iron when they were put into the furnace. Men may refine brass and iron long enough, before they will be good silver.

I say, then, mortification is not the present business of unregenerate men. God calls them not to it as yet; conversion is their work. The conversion of the whole soul, not the mortification of this or that particular lust. You would laugh at a man that you should see setting up a great fabric, and never take any care for a foundation; especially if you should see him so foolish, as that having a thousand experiences, that what he built one day fell down another, he would yet continue in the same course. So it is with convinced persons; though they plainly see, that what ground they get against sin one day, they lose another, yet they will go on in the same road still, without inquiring where the destructive flaw in their progress lies. When the Jews, upon the conviction of their sin were cut to the heart; Acts ii. 37. and cried out 'What shall we do?' What doth Peter direct them to do? does he bid them go and mortify their pride, wrath, malice, cruelty, and the like? No, he knew that was not their present work, but he calls them to conversion and faith in Christ in general; ver. 38. Let the soul be first thoroughly converted, and then 'looking on him whom they had pierced,' humiliation and mortification will ensue. Thus when John came to preach repentance and conversion, he said, 'The axe is now laid to the root of the tree;' Matt .iii. 19. The Pharisees had been laying heavy burdens, imposing tedious duties, and rigid means of mortification in fastings, washings, and the like; all in vain: says John, the doctrine of conversion is for you, the axe is

my hand is laid to the root. And our Saviour tells us, what is to be done in this case; says he, 'Do men gather grapes from thorns?' Matt. vi. 16. But suppose a thorn be well pruned, and cut, and have pains taken with him? Yea, but he will never bear figs; ver. 17, 18. it cannot be but every tree will bring forth fruit according to its own kind. What is then to be done? he tells us, Matt. xii. 33. 'Make the tree good, and his fruit will be good:' the root must be dealt with, the nature of the tree changed, or no good fruit will be brought forth.

This is that I aim at; unless a man be regenerate, unless he be a believer, all attempts that he can make for mortification, be they never so specious and promising, all means he can use, let him follow them with never so much diligence, earnestness, watchfulness, and intention of mind and spirit, are to no purpose. In vain shall he use many remedies, he shall not be healed. Yea, there are sundry desperate evils attending an endeavour in convinced persons, that are no more but so, to perform this duty.

[1.] The mind and soul is taken up about that which is not the man's proper business, and so he is diverted from that which is so. God lays hold by his word and judgments on some sin in him, galls his conscience, disquiets his heart, deprives him of his rest; now other diversions will not serve his turn; he must apply himself to the work before him. The business in hand being to awake the whole man unto a consideration of the state and condition wherein he is, that he might be brought home to God; instead hereof, he sets himself to mortify the sin that galls him, which is a pure issue of self-love, to be freed from his trouble; and not at all to the work he is called unto; and so is diverted from it. Thus God tells us of Ephraim, when he spread his net upon them, and brought them down as the fowls of heaven, and chastised them; Hos. vii. 12. caught them, entangled them, convinced them that they could not escape; saith he of them, 'They return, but not to the Most High:' they set themselves to a relinquishment of sin, but not in that manner by universal conversion, as God called for it. Thus are men diverted from coming unto God, by the most glorious ways that they can fix upon to come to him by. And this is one of the most common deceits whereby men

ruin their own souls; I wish that some whose trade it is to daub with untempered morter in the things of God, did not teach this deceit, and cause the people to err, by their ignorance; what do men do? What oft-times are they directed unto, when their consciences are galled by sin and disquietment, from the Lord who hath laid hold upon them? Is not a relinquishment of the sin as to practice, that they are in some fruits of it, perplexed withal, and making head against it, the sum of what they apply themselves unto, and is not the gospel end of their convictions lost thereby? here men abide and perish.

[2.] This duty being a thing good in itself, in its proper place, a duty evidencing sincerity, bringing home peace to the conscience, a man finding himself really engaged in it, his mind and heart set against this or that sin, with purpose and resolution to have no more to do with it, he is ready to conclude, that his state and condition is good, and so to delude his own soul. For,

1st. When his conscience hath been made sick with sin, and he could find no rest; when he should go to the great physician of souls, and get healing in his blood; the man by this engagement against sin, pacifies and quiets his conscience, and sits down without going to Christ at all. Ah! how many poor souls are thus deluded to eternity! when Ephraim saw his sickness, he sent to King Jareb; Hos. v. 13. which kept him off from God. The whole bundle of the Popish religion is made up of designs, and contrivances to pacify conscience without Christ: all described by the apostle; Rom. x. 4.

2ndly. By this means men satisfy themselves that their state and condition is good, seeing they do that which is a work good in itself, and they do not do it to be seen. They know they would have the work done in sincerity, and so are hardened in a kind of self-righteousness.

[3.] When a man hath thus for a season been deluded, and hath deceived his own soul, and finds in a long course of life, that indeed his sin is not mortified, or if he hath changed one, he hath gotten another, he begins at length to think, that all contending is in vain, he shall never be able to prevail. He is making a dam against water that increaseth on him. Hereupon he gives over, as one despair-

ing of any success, and yields up himself to the power of sin, and that habit of formality that he hath gotten.

And this is the usual issue with persons attempting the mortification of sin, without an interest in Christ first obtained. It deludes them, hardens them, destroys them. And therefore we see that there are not usually more vile and desperate sinners in the world, than such as having by conviction been put on this course, have found it fruitless, and deserted it without a discovery of Christ. And this is the substance of the religion and godliness of the choicest formalists in the world; and of all those, who in the Roman synagogue are drawn to mortification, as they drive Indians to baptism, or cattle to water. I say then, that mortification is the work of believers, and believers only. To kill sin is the work of living men, where men are dead, as all unbelievers, the best of them are dead, sin is alive, and will live.

2. It is the work of faith; the peculiar work of faith. Now, if there be a work to be done that will be effected by one only instrument, it is the greatest madness for any to attempt the doing of it, that hath not that instrument. Now it is faith that purifies the heart; Acts xv. 9. or, as Peter speaks, 'we purify our souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit;' 1 Pet. i. 22. And without it it will not be done.

What hath been spoken I suppose is sufficient to make good my first general rule: be sure to get an interest in Christ; if you intend to mortify any sin without it, it will never be done.

Ob. You will say, What then would you have unregenemen, that are convinced of the evil of sin do? Shall ease striving against sin, live dissolutely, give their their swing, and be as bad as the worst of men? This way to set the whole world into confusion, to bring ings into darkness, to set open the flood-gates of lust, ay the reins upon the necks of men to rush into all sin delight and greediness, like the horse into the battle.

Ans. 1. God forbid. It is to be looked on as a great issue the wisdom, goodness, and love of God, that by manifold s and means he is pleased to restrain the sons of men, ning forth into that compass of excess and riot, vedness of their nature would carry them out

unto with violence. By what way soever this is done, it is an issue of the care, kindness, and goodness of God, without which the whole earth would be a hell of sin and confusion.

2. There is a peculiar convincing power in the word, which God is oftentimes pleased to put forth to the wounding, amazing, and, in some sort, humbling of sinners, though they are never converted. And the word is to be preached though it hath this end, yet not with this end. Let then the word be preached, and the sins of men rebuked, lust will be restrained, and some oppositions will be made against sin, though that be not the effect aimed at.

3. Though this be the work of the word and Spirit, and it be good in itself, yet it is not profitable nor available as to the main end in them, in whom it is wrought; they are still in the gall of bitterness, and under the power of darkness.

4. Let men know it is their duty, but in its proper place; I take not men from mortification, but put them upon conversion. He that shall call a man from mending a hole in the wall of his house, to quench a fire that is consuming the whole building, is not his enemy. Poor soul! it is not thy sore finger, but thy hectic fever that thou art to apply thyself to the consideration of. Thou settest thyself against a particular sin, and dost not consider that thou art nothing but sin.

Let me add this to them who are preachers of the word, or intend through the good hand of God that employment. It is their duty to plead with men about their sins, to lay load on particular sins, but always remember, that it be done with that which is the proper end of law and gospel: that is, that they make use of the sin they speak against, to the discovery of the state and condition wherein the sinner is; otherwise, haply they may work men to formality and hypocrisy, but little of the true end of preaching the gospel will be brought about. It will not avail to beat a man off from his drunkenness, into a sober formality. A skilful master of the assemblies lays his axe at the root, drives still at the heart. To enveigh against particular sins of ignorant, unregenerate persons, such as the land is full of, is a good work: but yet, though it may be done with great efficacy, vigour, and success, if this be all the effect of it, that

they are set upon the most sedulous endeavours of mortifying their sins preached down, all that is done, is but like the beating of an enemy in an open field, and driving him into an impregnable castle, not to be prevailed against. Get you at any time a sinner at the advantage, on the account of any one sin whatever, have you any thing to take hold of him by, bring it to his state and condition, drive it up to the head, and there deal with him: to break men off particular sins, and not to break their hearts, is to deprive ourselves of advantages of dealing with them.

And herein is the Roman mortification grievously peccant; they drive all sorts of persons to it, without the least consideration, whether they have a principle for it or no. Yea, they are so far from calling on men to believe, that they may be able to mortify their lusts; that they call men to mortification, instead of believing. The truth is, they neither know what it is to believe, nor what mortification itself intends. Faith with them is but a general assent to the doctrine taught in their church; and mortification the betaking of a man by a vow to some certain course of life, wherein he denies himself something of the use of the things of this world, not without a considerable compensation. Such men know neither the Scriptures, nor the power of God. Their boasting of their mortification, is but their glorying in their shame. Some casuists among ourselves, who, overlooking the necessity of regeneration, do avowedly give this for a direction to all sorts of persons, that complain of any sin or lust, that they should vow against it, at least for a season, a month or so, seem to have a scantling of light in the mystery of the gospel, much like that of Nicodemus, when he came first to Christ. They bid men vow to abstain from their sin for a season. This commonly makes their lust more impetuous. Perhaps with great perplexity they keep their word: perhaps not, which increases their guilt and torment. Is their sin at all mortified hereby? Do they find a conquest over it? Is their condition changed, though they attain a relinquishment of it? Are they not
he gall of bitterness? Is not this to put men to make
not without straw, yet, which is worse, without
What promise hath any unregenerate man to
him in this work? What assistance for the

performance of it? Can sin be killed without an interest in the death of Christ, or mortified without the Spirit? If such directions should prevail to change men's lives, as seldom they do, yet they never reach to the change of their hearts or conditions. They may make men self-justitiaries, or hypocrites, not Christians. It grieves me oft-times to see poor souls, that have a zeal for God, and a desire of eternal welfare, kept by such directors and directions, under a hard, burdensome, outside worship and service of God, with many specious endeavours for mortification, in an utter ignorance of the righteousness of Christ, and unacquaintedness with his Spirit, all their days. Persons and things of this kind, I know too many. If ever God shine into their hearts, to give them the knowledge of his glory in the face of his Son Jesus Christ, they will see the folly of their present way.

CHAP. VIII.

The second general rule proposed. Without universal sincerity for the mortifying of every lust, no lust will be mortified. Partial mortification always from a corrupt principle. Perplexity of temptation from a lust, oftentimes a chastening for other negligences.

THE second principle, which to this purpose I shall propose, is this:

Without sincerity and diligence in a universality of obedience, there is no mortification of any one perplexing lust to be obtained.

The other was to the person, this to the thing itself. I shall a little explain this position.

A man finds any lust to bring him into the condition formerly described, it is powerful, strong, tumultuating, leads captive, vexes, disquiets, takes away peace; he is not able to bear it, wherefore he sets himself against it, prays against it, groans under it, sighs to be delivered; but in the meantime, perhaps, in other duties, in constant communion with God, in reading, prayer, and meditation, in other ways that are not of the same kind with the lust wherewith he is troubled, he is loose and negligent; let not that man think that ever he shall arrive to the mortification of the lust he is per-

plexed withal. This is a condition that not seldom befalls men in their pilgrimage. The Israelites, under a sense of their sin drew nigh to God with much diligence and earnestness, with fasting and prayer; Isa. lviii. many expressions are made of their earnestness in the work; ver. 2. 'They seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, they ask of me the ordinances of justice, they take delight in approaching unto God.' But God rejects all; their fast is a remedy that will not heal them, and the reason given of it, ver. 5—7, is, because they were particular in this duty. They attended diligently to that, but in others were negligent and careless. He that hath a running sore (it is the Scripture expression) upon him, arising from an ill habit of body, contracted by intemperance and ill diet; let him apply himself with what diligence and skill he can, to the cure of his sore, if he leave the general habit of his body under distempers, his labour and travail will be in vain. So will his attempts be, that shall endeavour to stop a bloody issue of sin and filth in his soul, and is not equally careful of his universal spiritual temperature and constitution. For,

1. This kind of endeavour for mortification, proceeds from a corrupt principle, ground, and foundation, so that it will never proceed to a good issue. The true and acceptable principles of mortification shall be afterward insisted on. Hatred of sin, as sin, not only as galling or disquieting, a sense of the love of Christ in the cross, lies at the bottom of all true spiritual mortification. Now it is certain, that that which I speak of, proceeds from self-love. Thou settest thyself with all diligence and earnestness to mortify such a lust or sin; what is the reason of it? It disquiets thee, it hath taken away thy peace, it fills thy heart with sorrow, and trouble, and fear; thou hast no rest because of it; yea, but friend, thou hast neglected prayer or reading, thou hast been vain and loose in thy conversation in other things, that have not been of the same nature with that lust wherewith thou art perplexed; these are no less sins and evils, than those under which thou groanest; Jesus Christ bled for them also. Why dost thou not set thyself against them also? If thou hatest sin as sin, every evil way, thou wouldst be no less watchful against every thing that grieves [illegible]quiets the Spirit of God, than against that which

grieves and disquiets thine own soul. It is evident that thou contendest against sin, merely because of thy own trouble by it. Would thy conscience be quiet under it, thou wouldst let it alone. Did it not disquiet thee, it should not be disquieted by thee. Now, canst thou think that God will set in with such hypocritical endeavours, that ever his Spirit will bear witness to the treachery and falsehood of thy spirit? Dost thou think he will ease thee of that which perplexeth thee, that thou mayest be at liberty to that which no less grieves him? No, says God, here is one, if he could be rid of this lust I should never hear of him more; let him wrestle with this or he is lost. Let not any man think to do his own work, that will not do God's. God's work consists in universal obedience; to be freed of the present perplexity is their own only. Hence is that of the apostle, 2 Cor. vii. 1. 'Cleanse yourselves from all pollution of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.' If we will do any thing, we must do all things. So then it is not only an intense opposition to this or that peculiar lust, but a universal humble frame and temper of heart, with wtachfulness over every evil, and for the performance of every duty that is accepted.

2. How knowest thou but that God hath suffered the lust wherewith thou hast been perplexed, to get strength in thee, and power over thee, to chasten thee for thy other negligences, and common lukewarmness in walking before him; at least to awaken thee to the consideration of thy ways, that thou mayest make a thorough work and change in thy course of walking with him?

The rage and predominancy of a particular lust is commonly the fruit and issue of a careless, negligent course in general; and that upon a double account.

(1.) As its natural effects, if I may so say. Lust, as I shewed, in general, lies in the heart of every one, even the the best, whilst he lives; and think not that the Scripture speaks in vain, that it is subtle, cunning, crafty, that it seduces, entices, fights, rebels. Whilst a man keeps a diligent watch over his heart, its root and fountain; whilst above all keepings, he keeps his heart, whence are the issues of life and death, lust withers, and dies in it. But if through negligence it makes an eruption any particular way, gets a

passage to the thoughts by the affections, and from them, and by them, perhaps breaks out into open sin in the conversation; the strength of it bears that way it hath found out, and that way mainly it urgeth, until, having got a passage, it then vexes and disquiets, and is not easily to be restrained: thus perhaps a man may be put to wrestle all his days in sorrow, with that, which by a strict and universal watch might easily have been prevented.

(2.) As I said, God oftentimes suffers it to chasten our other negligences: for as with wicked men, he gives them up to one sin, as the judgment of another, a greater for the punishment of a less, or one that will hold them more firmly and securely, for that which they might have possibly obtained a deliverance from;[a] so even with his own, he may, he doth, leave them sometimes, to some vexatious distempers, either to prevent or cure some other evil. So was the messenger of Satan let loose on Paul, that he 'might not be lifted up through the abundance of spiritual revelation.'[b] Was it not a correction to Peter's vain confidence, that he was left to deny his master? Now if this be the state and condition of lust in its prevalency, that God oftentimes suffers it so to prevail, at least to admonish us, and to humble us, perhaps to chasten and correct us for our general loose and careless walking, is it possible that the effect should be removed, and the cause continued; that the particular lust should be mortified, and the general course be unreformed? He then that would really, thoroughly, and acceptably mortify any disquieting lust, let him take care to be equally diligent in all parts of obedience, and know that every lust, every omission of duty, is burdensome to God, though but one, is so to him.[c] Whilst there abides a treachery in the heart to indulge to any negligence in not pressing universally to all perfection in obedience, the soul is weak, as not giving faith its whole work; and selfish, as considering more the trouble of sin, than the filth and guilt of it, and lives under a constant provocation of God, so that it may not expect any comfortable issue in any spiritual duty that it doth undertake, much less in this under consideration, which requires another principle and frame of spirit for its accomplishment.

[a] Rom. i. 26. [b] 2 Cor. xii. 7. [c] Isa. xliii. 24.

CHAP. IX.

Particular directions in relation to the foregoing case proposed. First, Consider the dangerous symptoms of any lust. 1. *Inveterateness.* 2. *Peace obtained under it; the several ways whereby that is done.* 3. *Frequency of success in its seductions.* 4. *The soul's fighting against it, with arguments only taken from the event.* 5. *Its being attended with judiciary hardness.* 6. *Its withstanding particular dealings from God. The state of persons in whom these things are found.*

THE foregoing general rules being supposed, particular directions to the soul, for its guidance under the sense of a disquieting lust or distemper, being the main thing I aim at, come next to be proposed. Now of these some are previous and preparatory, and in some of them the work itself is contained. Of the first sort are these ensuing.

1. Consider what dangerous symptoms thy lust hath attending or accompanying it. Whether it hath any deadly mark on it or no; if it hath, extraordinary remedies are to be used; an ordinary course of mortification will not do it.

You will say, what are these dangerous marks and symptoms, the desperate attendances of an indwelling lust that you intend? Some of them I shall name.

(1.) Inveterateness; if it hath lain long corrupting in thy heart, if thou hast suffered it to abide in power and prevalency, without attempting vigorously the killing of it, and the healing of the wounds thou hast received by it, for some long season, thy distemper is dangerous. Hast thou permitted worldliness, ambition, greediness of study, to eat up other duties; the duties wherein thou oughtest to hold constant communion with God, for some long season? or uncleanness to defile thy heart, with vain and foolish and wicked imaginations for many days? Thy lust hath a dangerous symptom. So was the case with David, Psal. xxxviii. 5. 'My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness.' When a lust hath lain long in the heart, corrupting, festering, cankering, it brings the soul to a woful condition. In such a case an ordinary course of humiliation will not do the work: whatever it be, it will by this means insinuate itself more or less into all the faculties of the soul, and habituate the affections to its company and society; it grows familiar to the

mind and conscience, that they do not startle at it as a strange thing, but are bold with it as that which they are wonted unto; yea, it will get such advantage by this means, as oftentimes to exert and put forth itself, without having any notice taken of it at all; as it seems to have been with Joseph in his swearing by the life of Pharaoh. Unless some extraordinary course be taken, such a person hath no ground in the world to expect that his latter end shall be peace. For,

[1.] How will he be able to distinguish between the long abode of an unmortified lust, and the dominion of sin, which cannot befall a regenerate person?

[2.] How can he promise himself, that it shall ever be otherwise with him, or that his lust will cease tumultuating and seducing, when he sees it fixed and abiding, and hath done so for many days, and hath gone through variety of conditions with him? It may be it hath tried mercies and afflictions, and those possibly so remarkable, that the soul could not avoid the taking special notice of them; it may be it hath weathered out many a storm; and passed under much variety of gifts in the administration of the word; and will it prove an easy thing, to dislodge an inmate pleading a little by prescription? Old neglected wounds are often mortal, always dangerous. Indwelling distempers grow rusty and stubborn, by continuance in ease and quiet. Lust is such an inmate, as if it can plead time and some prescription, will not easily be ejected. As it never dies of itself, so if it be not daily killed, it will always gather strength.

(2.) Secret pleas of the heart for the countenancing of itself, and keeping up its peace, notwithstanding the abiding of a lust, without a vigorous gospel attempt for its mortification, is another dangerous symptom of a deadly distemper in the heart. Now there be several ways whereby this may be done; I shall name some of them. As,

[1.] When upon thoughts, perplexing thoughts about sin, instead of applying himself to the destruction of it, a man searches his heart to see what evidences he can find of a good condition, notwithstanding that sin and lust, so that it may go well with him.

For a man to gather up his experiences of God, to call them to mind, to collect them, consider, try, improve them,

is an excellent thing; a duty practised by all the saints; commended in the Old Testament and the New. This was David's work, when he 'communed with his own heart,' and called to remembrance the former loving-kindness of the Lord.[a] This is the duty that Paul sets us to practise; 2 Cor. xiii. 5. And as it is in itself excellent, so it hath beauty added to it, by a proper season, a time of trial, or temptation, or disquietness of the heart about sin, is a picture of silver to set off this golden apple, as Solomon speaks; but now to do it, for this end, to satisfy conscience, which cries, and calls for another purpose, is a desperate device of a heart in love with sin. When a man's conscience shall deal with him, when God shall rebuke him for the sinful distemper of his heart, if he, instead of applying himself to get that sin pardoned in the blood of Christ and mortified by his Spirit, shall relieve himself by any such other evidences as he hath, or thinks himself to have, and so disentangle himself from under the yoke, that God was putting on his neck; his condition is very dangerous, his wound hardly curable. Thus the Jews, under the gallings of their own consciences, and the convincing preachings of our Saviour, supported themselves with this, that they were Abraham's children, and on that account accepted with God, and so countenanced themselves in all abominable wickedness, to their utter ruin.

This is in some degree, a blessing of a man's self, and saying that upon one account or other he shall have peace, 'although he adds drunkenness to thirst;' love of sin, undervaluation of peace, and of all tastes of love from God, are enwrapped in such a frame: such a one plainly shews, that if he can but keep up hope of escaping the 'wrath for to come,' he can be well content, to be unfruitful in the world, at any distance from God, that is not final separation. What is to be expected from such a heart?

[2.] By applying grace and mercy to an unmortified sin, or one not sincerely endeavoured to be mortified, is this deceit carried on. This is a sign of a heart greatly entangled with the love of sin. When a man hath secret thoughts in his heart, not unlike those of Naaman, about his worshipping in the house of Rimmon;[b] in all other things I will walk with

[a] Psal. lxxvii. 6—9. [b] 2 Kings v. 18.

will and affections, to a very great prevalency and conquest.

Such a person hath cast off, as to the particular spoken of, the conduct of renewing grace, and is kept from ruin only by restraining grace: and so far is he fallen from grace, and returned under the power of the law; and can it be thought that this is not a great provocation to Christ, that men should cast off his easy gentle yoke and rule, and cast themselves under the iron yoke of the law, merely out of indulgence unto their lusts?

Try thyself by this also, when thou art by sin driven to make a stand, so that thou must either serve it, and rush at the command of it into folly, like the horse into the battle, or make head against it to suppress it; what dost thou say to thy soul? what dost thou expostulate with thyself? Is this all, hell will be the end of this course, vengeance will meet with me, and find me out? It is time for thee to look about thee, evil lies at the door. Paul's main argument to evince that sin shall not have dominion over believers, is, that they 'are not under the law, but under grace;' Rom. vi. 14. If thy contendings against sin be all on legal accounts, from legal principles and motives, what assurance canst thou attain unto, that sin shall not have dominion over thee, which will be thy ruin?

Yea know that this reserve will not long hold out: if thy lust hath driven thee from stronger gospel forts, it will speedily prevail against this also; do not suppose that such considerations will deliver thee, when thou hast voluntarily given up to thine enemy those helps and means of preservation which have a thousand times their strengh; rest assuredly in this, that unless thou recover thyself with speed, from this condition, the thing that thou fearest will come upon thee; what gospel principles do not, legal motives cannot do.

(3.) When it is probable that there is, or may be somewhat [illegible] hardness, or at least of chastening punishment in [illegible] eting. This is another dangerous symptom, [illegible] imes leave even those of his own, under [illegible] st of some lust or sin, to correct [illegible] ce, and folly, I no way doubt. [illegible] the church, 'Why hast thou

unregenerate, so it cannot possibly be very good, but dangerous; and it is all one upon the matter, whether this be done by the choice of the will, or by inadvertency. For that inadvertency itself is in a manner chosen. When we are inadvertent and negligent, where we are bound to watchfulness and carefulness, that inadvertency doth not take off from the voluntariness of what we do thereupon; for although men do not choose and resolve to be negligent and inadvertent, yet if they choose the things that will make them so, they choose inadvertency itself, as a thing may be chosen in its cause.

And let not men think that the evil of their hearts is in any measure extenuated, because they seem for the most part to be surprised into that consent which they seem to give unto it; for it is negligence of their duty in watching over their hearts, that betrays them into that surprisal.

(4.) When a man fighteth against his sin only with arguments from the issue, or the punishment due unto it; this is a sign, that sin hath taken great possession of the will, and that in the heart there is a superfluity of naughtiness. Such a man as opposes nothing to the seduction of sin and lust in his heart, but fear of shame among men, or hell from God, is sufficiently resolved to do the sin, if there were no punishment attending it, which, what it differs from living in the practice of sin, I know not. Those who are Christ's, and are acted in their obedience upon gospel principles, have the death of Christ, the love of God, the detestable nature of sin, the preciousness of communion with God, a deep grounded abhorrency of sin, as sin, to oppose to any seduction of sin; to all the workings, strivings, fightings of lust in their hearts. So did Joseph, 'How shall I do this great evil,' saith he, 'and sin against the Lord?' my good and gracious God.[e] And Paul, 'The love of Christ constrains us;[f] and having received these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all pollution, of flesh and spirit;' 2 Cor. vii. 1. But now if a man be so under the power of his lust, that he hath nothing but law to oppose it withal, if he cannot fight against it with gospel weapons, but deals with it altogether with hell and judgment, which are the proper arms of the law, it is most evident, that sin hath possessed itself of his

[e] Gen. xxxix. 9. [f] 2 Cor. v. 14.

God makes a man stay on something that cuts him to the heart, and shakes him as to his present condition. More frequently in the hearing of the word preached, his great ordinance for conviction, conversion, and edification, doth he meet with men. God often hews men by the sword of his word in that ordinance; strikes directly on their bosom beloved lust; startles the sinner, makes him engage into the mortification and relinquishment of the evil of his heart. Now if his lust have taken such hold on him, as to enforce him to break these bonds of the Lord, and to cast these cords from him; if it overcomes these convictions, and gets again into its old posture; if it can cure the wounds it so receives, that soul is in a sad condition.

Unspeakable are the evils which attend such a frame of heart: every particular warning to a man in such an estate is an inestimable mercy; how then doth he despise God in them, who holds out against them; and what infinite patience is this in God, that he doth not cast off such a one, and swear in his wrath, that he shall never enter into his rest.

These and many other evidences are there of a lust that is dangerous, if not mortal. As our Saviour said of the evil spirit, 'This kind, goes not out but by fasting and prayer;' so say I, of lusts of this kind; an ordinary course of mortification will not do it, extraordinary ways must be fixed on.

This is the fifth particular direction; consider whether the lust or sin, you are contending with, hath any of these dangerous symptoms attending of it. Before I proceed, I must give one caution by the way, lest any be deceived by what hath been spoken. Whereas, I say, the things and evils above-mentioned may befall true believers, let not any that finds the same things in himself, thence or from thence conclude, that he is a true believer. These are the evils that believers may fall into, and be ensnared withal, not the things that constitute a believer. A man may as well conclude that he is a believer, because he is an adulterer; because David that was so, fell into adultery; as conclude it
the signs foregoing; which are the evils of sin and
n the hearts of believers. The 7th chapter of the
contains the description of a regenerate man. He
sider what is spoken of his dark side, of his

unregenerate part, of the indwelling power and violence of sin remaining in him, and because he finds the like in himself, conclude that he is a regenerate man, will be deceived in his reckoning. It is all one as if you should argue, a wise man may be sick and wounded, yea, do some things foolishly, therefore every one, who is sick and wounded, and does things foolishly is a wise man. Or as if a silly deformed creature hearing one speaking of a beautiful person, should say that he had a mark or a scar that much disfigured him, should conclude that because he hath himself scars, and moles, and warts, that he also is beautiful. If you will have evidences of your being believers, it must be from those things that constitute men believers. He that hath these things in himself, may safely conclude, if I am a believer, I am a most miserable one. But that any man is so, he must look for other evidences, if he will have peace.

CHAP. X.

The second particular direction. Get a clear sense of, 1. *The guilt of the sin perplexing. Considerations for help therein proposed.* 2. *The danger manifold.* (1.) *Hardening.* (2.) *Temporal correction.* (3.) *Loss of peace and strength.* (4.) *Eternal destruction. Rules for this management of the consideration.* 3. *The evil of it.* (1.) *In grieving the Spirit.* (2.) *Wounding the new creature.*

THE second direction is this: Get a clear and abiding sense upon thy mind and conscience of the guilt, danger, and evil, of that sin, wherewith thou art perplexed.

1. Of the guilt of it. It is one of the deceits of a prevailing lust, to extenuate its own guilt. Is it not a little one? 'When I go and bow myself in the house of Rimmon, God be merciful to me in this thing.' Though this be bad, yet it is not so bad, as such and such an evil; others of the people of God have had such a frame; yea, what dreadful actual sins have some of them fallen into. Innumerable ways there are, whereby sin diverts the mind from a right and due apprehension of its guilt. Its noisome exhalations darken the mind, that it cannot make a right judgment of things. Perplexings reasonings, extenuating promises, tu-

multuating desires, treacherous purposes of relinquishment, hopes of mercy; all have their share in disturbing the mind, in its consideration of the guilt of a prevailing lust. The prophet tells us, that lust will do thus wholly, when it comes to the height; Hos. iv. 11. 'Whoredom and wine, and new wine take away the heart;' the heart, i. e. the understanding, as it is often used in the Scripture. And as they accomplish this work to the height in unregenerate persons, so in part in regenerate also. Solomon tells you of him who was enticed by the lewd woman, that he was among the simple ones, he was 'a young man void of understanding;' Prov. vii. 7. And wherein did his folly appear? Why, says he, in the 23d ver. 'He knew not that it was for his life;' he considered not the guilt of the evil that he was involved in. And the Lord rendering a reason why his dealings with raim took no better effect, gives this account; 'Ephraim ke a silly dove, without heart;' Hos. vii. 11. had no untanding of his own miserable condition. Had it been sible that David should have lain so long in the guilt of hat abominable sin, but that he had innumerable corrupt ionings, hindering him from taking a clear view of its ness and guilt in the glass of the law; this made the het that was sent for his awaking, in his dealings with to shut up all subterfuges and pretences, by his para- hat so he might fall fully under a sense of the guilt of is is the proper issue of lust in the heart, it darkens the hat it shall not judge aright of its guilt, and many ays it hath for its own extenuation, that I shall not st on.

his then be the first care of him that would mortify a right judgment of its guilt in his mind. To take these considerations to thy assistance.

gh the power of sin be weakened by inherent n that have it, that sin shall not have dominion s it hath over others; yet the guilt of sin that e and remain, is aggravated and heightened by

2. 'What shall we say then? Shall we conace may abound? God forbid. How shall sin live any longer therein?' How shall phasis is on the word 'we.' How rward describes it, have received

grace from Christ to the contrary? We doubtless are more evil than any; if we do it. I shall not insist on the special aggravations of the sins of such persons; how they sin against more love, mercy, grace, assistance, relief, means, and deliverances, than others. But let this consideration abide in thy mind; there is inconceivably more evil and guilt in the evil of thy heart, that doth remain, than there would be in so much sin, if thou hadst no grace at all. Observe,

(2.) That as God sees abundance of beauty and excellency in the desires of the heart of his servants, more than in any the most glorious works of other men, yea, more than in most of their own outward performances, which have a greater mixture of sin, than the desires and pantings of grace in the heart have, so God sees a great deal of evil in the working of lust in their hearts, yea, and more than in the open, notorious acts of wicked men, or in many outward sins whereinto the saints may fall, seeing against them there is more opposition made, and more humiliation generally follows them. Thus Christ, dealing with his decaying children, goes to the root with them; lays aside their profession; Rev. iii. 15. I know thee, thou art quite another thing than thou professest, and this makes thee abominable.

So then; let these things and the like considerations lead thee to a clear sense of the guilt of thy indwelling lust, that there may be no room in thy heart for extenuating, or excusing thoughts, whereby sin insensibly will get strength and prevail.

2. Consider the danger of it, which is manifold.

(1.) Of being hardened by its deceitfulness; this the apostle sorely charges on the Hebrews, chap. iii. 12, 13. 'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.' Take heed, saith he, use all means, consider your temptations, watch diligently, there is a treachery, a deceit in sin, that tends to the hardening of your hearts from the fear of God. The hardening here mentioned is to the utmost; utter obduration, sin tends to it, and every distemper and lust will make at least some progress towards it. Thou that wast tender,

and didst use to melt under the word, under afflictions, wilt grow as some have profanely spoken, sermon proof, and sickness proof; thou that didst tremble at the presence of God, thoughts of death, and appearance before him, when thou hadst more assurance of his love than now thou hast, shalt have a stoutness upon thy spirit, not to be moved by these things. Thy soul and thy sin shall be spoken of, and spoken to, and thou shalt not be at all concerned; but shalt be able to pass over duties, praying, hearing, reading, and thy heart not in the least affected. Sin will grow a light thing to thee; thou wilt pass it by as a thing of nought; this it will grow to, and what will be the end of such a condition? can a sadder thing befall thee? is it not enough to make any heart to tremble to think of being brought into that estate, wherein he should have slight thoughts of sin? slight thoughts of grace, of mercy, of the blood of Christ, of the law, heaven and hell, come all in at the same season: take heed, this is that thy lust is working towards; the hardening of the heart, searing of the conscience, blinding of the mind, stupifying of the affections, and deceiving of the whole soul.

(2.) The danger of some great temporal correction, which the Scripture calls vengeance, judgment, and punishment; Psal. lxxxix. 30—33. Though God should not utterly cast thee off for this abomination that lies in thy heart, yet he will visit thee with the rod; though he pardon and forgive, will take vengeance of thy inventions. O remember id and all his troubles; look on him flying into the erness, and consider the hand of God upon him. Is it ng to thee, that God should kill thy child in anger, thy estate in anger, break thy bones in anger, suffer o be a scandal and reproach in anger, kill thee, de- iee, make thee lie down in darkness, in anger? Is it that he should punish, ruin, and undo others for thy et me not be mistaken! I do not mean, that God nd all these things always on his in anger; God for- But this, I say, that when he doth so deal with thee, conscience bears witness with him, what thy pro- have been, thou wilt find his dealings full of bit- thy soul. If thou fearest not these things, I fear r hardness.

(3.) Loss of peace and strength all a man's days. To have peace with God, to have strength to walk before God, is the sum of the great promises of the covenant of grace. In these things is the life of our souls. Without them in some comfortable measure, to live, is to die. What good will our lives do us, if we see not the face of God sometimes in peace? If we have not some strength to walk with him? Now both these will an unmortified lust certainly deprive the souls of men of. This case is so evident in David, as that nothing can be more clear. How often doth he complain that his bones were broken, his soul disquieted, his wounds grievous on this account? Take other instances; Isa. lvii. 18. 'For the iniquity of his covetousness I was wrath, and hid myself.' What peace, I pray, is there to a soul while God hides himself; or strength whilst he smites? Hos. v. 15. 'I will go and return to my place, until they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face.' I will leave them, hide my face, and what will become of their peace and strength? If ever then thou hast enjoyed peace with God, if ever his terrors have made thee afraid, if ever thou hast had strength to walk with him, or ever hast mourned in thy prayer, and been troubled because of thy weakness, think of this danger that hangs over thy head. It is perhaps but a little while and thou shalt see the face of God in peace no more. Perhaps by to-morrow thou shalt not be able to pray, read, hear, or perform any duties with the least cheerfulness, life, or vigour; and possibly thou mayest never see a quiet hour whilst thou livest; that thou mayest carry about thee broken bones, full of pain and terror all the days of thy life; yea, perhaps God will shoot his arrows at thee, and fill thee with anguish and disquietness, with fears and perplexities; make thee a terror and an astonishment to thyself and others, shew thee hell and wrath every moment; frighten and scare thee with sad apprehensions of his hatred, so that thy sore shall run in the night season, and thy soul shall refuse comfort; so that thou shalt wish death rather than life, yea, thy soul may choose strangling. Consider this a little, though God should not utterly destroy thee, yet he might cast thee into this condition, wherein thou shalt have quick and living apprehensions of thy destruction. Wont thy heart to thoughts hereof. Let

it know what is like to be the issue of its state, leave not this consideration, until thou hast made thy soul to tremble within thee.

(4.) There is the danger of eternal destruction.

For the due management of this consideration, observe,

[1.] That there is such a connexion between a continuance in sin, and eternal destruction, that though God does resolve to deliver some from a continuance in sin, that they may not be destroyed, yet he will deliver none from destruction, that continue in sin. So that whilst any one lies under an abiding power of sin, the threats of destruction and everlasting separation from God are to be held out to him; so Heb. iii. 12. to which add chap. x. 38. This is the rule of God's proceeding. If any man depart from him, 'draw back through unbelief, God's soul hath no pleasure in him, that is, his indignation shall pursue him to destruction; so evidently, Gal. vi. 8.

[2.] That he who is so entangled as above described under the power of any corruption, can have at that present no clear prevailing evidence of his interest in the covenant, by the efficacy whereof he may be delivered from fear of destruction. So that destruction from the Lord may justly be a terror to him; and he may, he ought to look upon it, as that which will be the end of his course and ways. 'There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;' Rom. viii. 1. true; but who shall have the comfort of this assertion? Who may assume it to himself? 'They that walk after the Spirit, and not after the flesh.' But you will say, Is not this to persuade men to unbelief? I answer, no; there is a twofold judgment that a man may make of himself; first, of his person, and secondly, of his ways. It is the judgment of his ways, not his person that I speak of; let a man get the best evidence for his person that he can, yet to judge that an evil way will end in destruction, is his duty, not to do it is atheism. I do not say, that in such a condition a man ought to throw away the evidences of his personal interest in Christ; but I say, he cannot keep them. There is a twofold condemnation of a man's self; First, In respect of desert, when the soul concludes, that it deserves to be cast out of the presence of God; and this is so far from a business of unbelief, that it is an effect of faith. Secondly, With respect

to the issue and event; when the soul concludes it shall be damned. I do not say this is the duty of any one, nor do I call them to it; but this I say, that the end of the way wherein a man is, ought by him to be concluded to be death, that he may be provoked to fly from it. And this is another consideration, that ought to dwell upon such a soul, if it desire to be freed from the entanglement of its lusts.

3. Consider the evils of it; I mean its present evils. Danger respects what is to come; evil what is present. Some of the many evils that attend an unmortified lust may be mentioned.

(1.) It grieves the holy and blessed Spirit, which is given to believers to dwell in them, and abide with them. So the apostle, Eph. iv. 25—29. dehorting them from many lusts and sins, gives this as the great motive of it, ver. 30. 'Grieve not the Holy Spirit, whereby you are sealed to the day of of redemption.' Grieve not that Spirit of God, saith he, whereby you receive so many and so great benefits, of which he instances in one signal and comprehensive one; 'sealing to the day of redemption.' He is grieved by it, as a tender and loving friend is grieved at the unkindness of his friend, of whom he hath well deserved; so is it with this tender and loving Spirit, who hath chosen our hearts for a habitation to dwell in, and there to do for us all that our souls desire. He is grieved by our harbouring his enemies, and those whom he is to destroy in our hearts, with him. He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve us; Lam. iii. 33. and shall we daily grieve him? Thus is he said sometimes to be vexed, sometimes grieved at his heart, to express the greatest sense of our provocation. Now if there be any thing of gracious ingenuity left in the soul, if it be not utterly hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, this consideration will certainly affect it. Consider who and what thou art, who the Spirit is that is grieved, what he hath done for thee, what he comes to thy soul about, what he hath already done in thee, and be ashamed. Among those who walk with God, there is no greater motive and incentive unto universal holiness, and the preserving of their hearts and spirits, in all purity and cleanness than this, that the blessed Spirit, who hath undertaken to dwell in them as temples of God, and to preserve them meet for him who so dwells in them, is continually considering what they give entertainment in their

hearts unto, and rejoiceth when his temple is kept undefiled; that was a high aggravation of the sin of Zimri, that he brought his adulteress into the congregation in the sight of Moses and the rest, who were weeping for the sins of the people; Numb. xxv. 6. and is it not a high aggravation of the countenancing a lust, or suffering it to abide in the heart, when it is (as it must be, if we are believers), entertained under the peculiar eye and view of the Holy Ghost; taking care to preserve his tabernacle pure and holy.

(2.) The Lord Jesus Christ is wounded afresh by it; his new creature in the heart is wounded; his love is foiled; his adversary gratified. As a total relinquishment of him, by the deceitfulness of sin, is the crucifying him afresh, and the 'putting of him to open shame;' so every harbouring of sin that he came to destroy, wounds and grieves him.

(3.) It will take away a man's usefulness in his generation. His works, his endeavours, his labours, seldom receive blessing from God. If he be a preacher, God commonly blows upon his ministry, that he shall labour in the fire, and not be honoured with any success, or doing any work for God; and the like may be spoken of other conditions. The world is at this day full of poor withering professors; how few are there that walk in any beauty or glory; how barren, how useless, are they for the most part? Amongst the many reasons that may be assigned of this sad estate, it may justly be feared, that this is none of the least effectual; many men harbour spirit-devouring lusts, in their bosoms, that lie as worms, at the root of their obedience and corrode and weaken it day by day. All graces, all the ways and means whereby any graces may be exercised and improved, are prejudiced by this means; and as to any success God blasts such men's undertakings.

This then is my second direction, and it regards the opposition that is to be made to lust, in respect of its habitual residence in the soul; keep alive upon thy heart, these or the like considerations of its guilt, danger, and evil; be much in the meditation of these things. Cause thy heart to dwell and abide upon them. Engage thy thoughts into these considerations, let them not go off, nor wander from them, until they begin to have a powerful influence upon thy soul; until they make it to tremble.

CHAP. XI.

The third direction proposed. Load thy conscience with the guilt of the perplexing distemper. The ways and means whereby that may be done. The fourth direction. Vehement desire for deliverance. The fifth. Some distempers rooted deeply in men's natural tempers. Considerations of such distempers: ways of dealings with them. The sixth direction. Occasions and advantages of sin to be prevented. The seventh direction. The first actings of sin vigorously to be opposed.

THIS is my third direction.

Load thy conscience with the guilt of it. Not only consider that it hath a guilt, but load thy conscience with the guilt of its actual eruptions and disturbances.

For the right improvement of this rule, I shall give some particular directions.

1. Take God's method in it, and begin with generals, and so descend to particulars.

(1.) Charge thy conscience with that guilt which appears in it, from the rectitude and holiness of the law. Bring the holy law of God into thy conscience, lay thy corruption to it; pray that thou mayest be affected with it. Consider the holiness, spirituality, fiery severity, inwardness, absoluteness of the law; and see how thou canst stand before it. Be much, I say, in affecting thy conscience with the terror of the Lord in the law, and how righteous it is, that every one of thy transgressions should receive a recompense of reward. Perhaps thy conscience will invent shifts and evasions to keep off the power of this consideration, as that the condemning power of the law doth not belong to thee, thou art set free from it, and the like; and so, though thou be not conformable to it, yet thou needest not to be so much troubled at it. But,

[1.] Tell thy conscience, that it cannot manage any evidence to the purpose, that thou art free from the condemning power of sin, whilst thy unmortified lust lies in thy heart; so that perhaps the law may make good its plea against thee, for a full dominion, and then thou art a lost creature. Wherefore it is best to ponder to the utmost, what it hath to say.

Assuredly, he that pleads in the most secret reserve of his heart, that he is freed from the condemning power of the law, thereby secretly to countenance himself in giving the least allowance unto any sin or lust, is not able on gospel grounds, to manage any evidence unto any tolerable spiritual security, that indeed he is in a due manner freed from what he so pretends himself to be delivered.

[2.] Whatever be the issue, yet the law hath commission from God to seize upon transgressors, wherever it find them, and so bring them before his throne, where they are to plead for themselves. This is thy present case, the law hath found thee out; and before God it will bring thee, if thou canst plead a pardon, well and good, if not, the law will do its work.

[3.] However, this is the proper work of the law, to discover sin in the guilt of it, to awake and humble the soul for it, to be a glass to represent sin in its colours; and if thou deniest to deal with it on this account, it is not through faith, but through the hardness of thy heart, and the deceitfulness of sin.

This is a door that too many professors have gone out at, unto open apostacy; such a deliverance from the law they have pretended, as that they would consult its guidance and direction no more; they would measure their sin by it no more; by little and little this principle hath insensibly, from the notion of it, proceeded to influence their practical understandings; and, having taken possession there, hath turned the will and affections loose to all manner of abominations.

By such ways, I say then as these, persuade thy conscience to hearken diligently to what the law speaks in the name of the Lord unto thee, about thy lust and corruption. Oh! if thy ears be open, it will speak with a voice that shall make thee tremble, that shall cast thee to the ground, and fill thee with astonishment. If ever thou wilt mortify thy corons, thou must tie up thy conscience to the law, shut m all shifts and exceptions, until it owns its guilt with ır and thorough apprehension; so that thence, as David :s, thy 'iniquity may ever be before thee.'

Bring thy lust to the gospel; not for relief, but for onviction of its guilt, look on him whom thou hast

pierced, and be in bitterness. Say to thy soul, What have I done; what love, what mercy, what blood, what grace have I despised and trampled on? Is this the return I make to the Father, for his love, to the Son for his blood, to the Holy Ghost for his grace? Do I thus requite the Lord? Have I defiled the heart that Christ died to wash, that the blessed Spirit hath chosen to dwell in? And can I keep myself out of the dust? What can I say to the dear Lord Jesus? How shall I hold up my head with any boldness before him? Do I account communion with him of so little value, that for this vile lust's sake, I have scarce left him any room in my heart? How shall I escape, if I neglect so great salvation? In the meantime, what shall I say to the Lord? Love, mercy, grace, goodness, peace, joy, consolation, I have despised them all, and esteemed them as a thing of nought, that I might harbour a lust in my heart. Have I obtained a view of God's fatherly countenance, that I might behold his face, and provoke him to his face? Was my soul washed, that room might be made for new defilements? Shall I endeavour to disappoint the end of the death of Christ? Shall I daily grieve that Spirit whereby I am sealed to the day of redemption? Entertain thy conscience daily with this treaty. See if it can stand before this aggravation of its guilt. If this make it not sink in some measure and melt, I fear thy case is dangerous.

2. Descend to particulars. As under the general head of the gospel, all the benefits of it are to be considered, as redemption, justification, and the like; so in particular, consider the management of the love of them towards thine own soul, for the aggravation of the guilt of thy corruption. As,

(1.) Consider the infinite patience and forbearance of God towards thee in particular. Consider what advantages he might have taken against thee, to have made thee a shame and a reproach in this world, and an object of wrath for ever. How thou hast dealt treacherously and falsely with him from time to time, flattered him with thy lips, but broken all promises and engagements, and that by the means of that sin thou art now in pursuit of; and yet he hath spared thee from time to time, although thou seemest boldly to have put it to the trial how long he could hold

out. And wilt thou yet sin against him? Wilt thou yet weary him and make him to serve with thy corruptions?

Hast thou not often been ready to conclude thyself, that it was utterly impossible that he should bear any longer with thee; that he would cast thee off, and be gracious no more; that all his forbearance was exhausted, and hell and wrath was even ready prepared for thee? and yet above all thy expectation he hath returned with visitations of love. And wilt thou yet abide in the provocation of the eyes of his glory?

(2.) How often hast thou been at the door of being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin; and by the infinite rich grace of God hast been recovered to communion with him again?

Hast thou not found grace decaying; delight in duties, ordinances, and prayer, meditation vanishing; inclinations to loose careless walking thriving, and they who before entangled almost beyond recovery? hast thou not found thyself engaged in such ways, societies, companies, and that with delight, as God abhors? and wilt thou venture any more to the brink of hardness?

(3.) All God's gracious dealings with thee in providential dispensations, deliverances, afflictions, mercies, enjoyments, all ought here to take place. By these, I say, and the like means, load thy conscience, and leave it not, until it be thoroughly affected with the guilt of thy indwelling corruption, until it is sensible of its wound, and lie in the dust before the Lord; unless this be done to the purpose, all other endeavours are to no purpose. Whilst the conscience hath any means to alleviate the guilt of sin, the soul will never vigorously attempt its mortification.

(4.) Being thus affected with thy sin, in the next place, get a constant longing, breathing after deliverance from the power of it. Suffer not thy heart one moment to be contented with thy present frame and condition. Longing desires after any thing, in things natural and civil, are of no value nor consideration, any farther, but as they incite and stir up the person in whom they are, to a diligent use of s, for the bringing about the thing aimed at. In spi- hings it is otherwise. Longing, breathing, and pant- deliverance, is a grace in itself, that hath a mighty

power to conform the soul into the likeness of the thing longed after. Hence the apostle, describing the repentance and godly sorrow of the Corinthians, reckons this as one eminent grace that was then set on work; vehement desire; 2 Cor. vii. 11. And in this case of indwelling sin, and the power of it, what frame doth he express himself to be in; Rom. vii. 24. His heart breaks out with longings, into a most passionate expression of desire of deliverance. Now if this be the frame of saints, upon the general consideration of indwelling sin, how is it to be heightened and increased, when thereunto is added the perplexing rage and power of any particular lust and corruption? Assure thyself, unless thou longest for deliverance, thou shalt not have it.

This will make the heart watchful for all opportunities of advantage against its enemy; and ready to close with any assistances that are afforded for its destruction: strong desires are the very life of that praying always which is enjoined us, in all condition, and in none is more necessary than in this; they set faith and hope on work, and are the soul's moving after the Lord.

Get thy heart then into a panting and breathing frame, long, sigh, cry out; you know the example of David, I shall not need to insist on it.

The fifth direction is,

Fifthly, Consider whether the distemper with which thou art perplexed, be not rooted in thy nature, and cherished, fomented, and heightened from thy constitution. A proneness to some sins may doubtless lie in the natural temper and disposition of men. In this case consider,

1. This is not in the least an extenuation of the guilt of thy sin. Some with an open profaneness will ascribe gross enormities to their temper and disposition. And whether others may not relieve themselves from the pressing guilt of their distempers by the same consideration, I know not. It is from the fall, from the original depravation of our natures, that the *fomes* and nourishment of any sin abides in our natural temper. David reckons his being shapen in iniquity and conception in sin,* as an aggravation of his following sin, not a lessening or extenuation of it. That thou art peculiarly inclined unto any sinful distemper, is but a peculiar breaking

* Psal. li. 5.

out of original lust in thy nature, which should peculiarly abase and humble thee.

2. That thou hast to fix upon on this account, in reference to thy walking with God, is that so great an advantage is given to sin, as also to Satan, by this thy temper and disposition, that without extraordinary watchfulness, care, and diligence, they will assuredly prevail against thy soul. Thousands have been on this account hurried headlong to hell, who otherwise at least might have gone at a more gentle, less provoking, less mischievous rate.

3. For the mortification of any distemper, so rooted in the nature of a man, unto all other ways and means, already named or farther to be insisted on, there is one expedient peculiarly suited. This is that of the apostle, 1 Cor. ix. 27. 'I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.' The bringing of the very body into subjection, is an ordinance of God tending to the mortification of sin. This gives check unto the natural root of the distemper, and withers it by taking away its fatness of soil. Perhaps, because the Papists, men ignorant of the righteousness of Christ, the work of his Spirit, and whole business in hand, have laid the whole weight and stress of mortification in voluntary services and penances, leading to the subjection of the body, knowing indeed the true nature neither of sin nor mortification; it may on the other side be a temptation to some, to neglect some means of humiliation which by God himself are owned and appointed. The bringing of the body into subjection in the case insisted on, by cutting short the natural appetite, by fasting, watching, and the like, is doubtless acceptable to God, so it be done with the ensuing limitations.

(1.) That the outward weakening and impairing of the body be not looked upon as a thing good in itself, or that any mortification doth consist therein, which were again to bring us under carnal ordinances; but only as a means for the end proposed, the weakening of any distemper in its natural root and seat. A man may have leanness of body and soul together.

(2.) That the means whereby this is done, namely, by fasting and watching, and the like, be not looked on as things that in themselves, and by virtue of their own power, can

produce true mortification of any sin; for if they would, sin might be mortified without any help of the Spirit, in any unregenerate person in the world. They are to be looked on only as ways whereby the Spirit may, and sometimes doth, put forth strength for the accomplishing of his own work, especially in the case mentioned. Want of a right understanding, and due improvement of these and the like considerations, hath raised a mortification among the Papists, that may be better applied to horses, and other beasts of the field, than to believers.

This is the sum of what hath been spoken; when the distemper complained of seems to be rooted in the natural temper and constitution, in applying our souls to a participation of the blood and Spirit of Christ, an endeavour is to be used to give check in the way of God to the natural root of that distemper.

The sixth direction is,

Sixthly, Consider what occasions, what advantages thy distemper hath taken to exert and put forth itself, and watch against them all.

This is one part of that duty which our blessed Saviour recommends to his disciples under the name of watching; Mark xiii. 37. 'I say unto you all, watch;' which in Luke xxi. 34. is, 'Take heed that your hearts be not overcharged;' watch against all eruptions of thy corruptions. I mean that duty which David professed himself to be exercised unto; 'I have,' saith he, 'kept myself from mine iniquity.' He watched all the ways and workings of his iniquity, to prevent them, to rise up against them. This is that which we are called unto under the name of considering our ways; consider what ways, what companies, what opportunities, what studies, what businesses, what conditions, have at any time given, or do usually give advantages to thy distempers, and set thyself heedfully against them all. Men will do this with respect unto their bodily infirmities and distempers. The seasons, the diet, the air that have proved offensive, shall be avoided. Are the things of the soul of less importance? Know that he that dares to dally with occasions of sin, will dare to sin. He that will venture upon temptations unto wickedness, will venture upon wickedness. Hazael thought he should not be so wicked as the prophet

told him he would be; to convince him, the prophet tells him no more, but 'Thou shalt be king of Syria.' If he will venture on temptations unto cruelty, he will be cruel. Tell a man he shall commit such and such sins, he will startle at it; if you can convince him, that he will venture on such occasions and temptations of them, he will have little ground left for his confidence. Particular directions belonging to this head are many, not now to be insisted on. But because this head is of no less of importance than the whole doctrine here handled, I have at large in another treatise, about entering into temptations treated of it.

The seventh direction is,

Seventhly, Rise mightily against the first actings of thy distemper, its first conceptions; suffer it not to get the least ground. Do not say, Thus far it shall go, and no farther. If it have allowance for one step, it will take another. It is impossible to fix bounds to sin. It is like water in a channel; if it once break out, it will have its course. Its not acting is easier to be compassed, than its bounding. Therefore doth James give that gradation and process of lust, chap. i. 14, 15. that we may stop at the entrance. Dost thou find thy corruption to begin to entangle thy thoughts? rise up with all thy strength against it, with no less indignation, than if it had fully accomplished what it aims at; consider what an unclean thought would have; it would have thee roll thyself in folly and filth. Ask envy what it would have; murder and destruction is at the end of it. Set thyself against it with no less vigour, than if it had utterly debased thee to wickedness. Without this course thou wilt not prevail. As sin gets ground in the affections to delight in, it gets also upon the understanding to slight it.

CHAP. XII.

The eighth direction. Thoughtfulness of the excellency of the majesty of God. Our unacquaintedness with him, proposed and considered.

Eighthly, Use and exercise thyself to such meditations as may serve to fill thee at all times with self-abasement and thoughts of thine own vileness; as,

1. Be much in thoughtfulness of the excellency of the majesty of God and thine infinite inconceivable distance from him; many thoughts of it cannot but fill thee with a sense of thine own vileness, which strikes deep at the root of any indwelling sin. When Job comes to a clear discovery of the greatness and the excellency of God, he is filled with self-abhorrence, and is pressed to humiliation; Job xlii. 5, 6. And in what state doth the prophet Habakkuk affirm himself to be cast upon the apprehension of the majesty of God? chap. iii. 16. 'With God,' says Job, 'is terrible majesty.'[a] Hence were the thoughts of them of old, that when they had seen God, they should die. The Scripture abounds in this self-abasing consideration, comparing the men of the earth to grasshoppers, to vanity, the dust of the balance in respect of God.[b] Be much in thoughts of this nature, to abase the pride of thy heart, and to keep thy soul humble within thee. There is nothing will render thee a greater indisposition to be imposed on by the deceits of sin, than such a frame of heart. Think greatly of the greatness of God.

2. Think much of thine unacquaintedness with him. Though thou knowest enough to keep thee low and humble, yet how little a portion is it that thou knowest of him? The contemplation hereof cast that wise man into that apprehension of himself, which he expresses; Prov. xxx. 2–4. 'Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy. Who hath ascended up into heaven or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?' Labour with this also to take down the pride of thy heart. What dost thou know of God? How little a portion is it? How immense is he in his nature? Canst thou look without terror into the abyss of eternity? Thou canst not bear the rays of his glorious being.

Because I look on this consideration of great use in our walking with God, so far as it may have a consistency with that filial boldness which is given us in Jesus Christ to draw

[a] Job xxxvii. 22. [b] Isa. xl. 13—15.

nigh to the throne of grace, I shall farther insist upon it, to give an abiding impression of it to the souls of them who desire to walk humbly with God.

Consider then, I say, to keep thy heart in continual awe of the majesty of God, that persons of the most high and eminent attainment, of the nearest and most familiar communion with God, do yet in this life know but a very little of him, and his glory. God reveals his name to Moses, the most glorious attributes that he hath manifested in the covenant of grace; Exod. xxxiv. 5, 6. yet all are but the back-parts of God. All that he knows by it, is but little, low, compared to the perfection of his glory. Hence it is with peculiar reference to Moses, that it is said 'No man hath seen God at any time;' John i. 18. of him in comparison with Christ doth he speak, ver. 17. and of him it is here said, 'No man,' no not Moses, the most eminent among them, 'hath seen God at any time.' We speak much of God, can talk of him, his ways, his works, his counsels, all the day long; the truth is, we know very little of him; our thoughts, our meditations, our expressions of him are low, many of them unworthy of his glory, none of them reaching his perfections.

You will say, that Moses was under the law, when God wrapped up himself in darkness, and his mind in types and clouds and dark institutions. Under the glorious shining of the gospel, which hath brought light and immortality to light, God being revealed from his own bosom, we now know him much more clearly, and as he is; we see his face now, and not his back-parts only, as Moses did.

Ans. 1. I acknowledge a vast, and almost inconceivable difference between the acquaintance we now have with God, after his speaking to us by his own Son,[c] and that which the generality of the saints had under the law: for although their eyes were as good, sharp, and clear as ours, their faith and spiritual understanding, not behind ours, the object as glorious unto them, as unto us, yet our day is more clear than theirs was; the clouds are blown away and scattered,[d] the shadows of the night are gone and fled away, the sun is risen, and the means of sight is made more eminent and clear than formerly. Yet,

[c] Heb. i. 11. [d] Cant. iv. 6.

2. That peculiar sight which Moses had of God, Exod. xxxiv. was a gospel-sight, a sight of God, as gracious, &c. and yet, it is called but his back-parts, that is, but low and mean, in comparison of his excellencies and perfections.

3. The apostle, exalting to the utmost this glory of light, above that of the law, manifesting that now the veil causing darkness, is taken away; so that with open or uncovered face[d] we behold the glory of the Lord, tells us how; 'as in a glass;' 2 Cor. iii. 18. in a glass, how is that? Clearly; perfectly? alas! no. He tells you how that is, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 'We see through a glass darkly,' saith he; it is not a telescope that helps us to see things afar off, concerning which the apostle speaks: and yet what poor helps are they? How short do we come of the truth of things, notwithstanding their assistance? It is a looking-glass whereunto he alludes (where are only obscure species and images of things, and not the things themselves), and a sight therein that he compares our knowledge to. He tells you also that all that we do see δι' ἐσόπτρου, 'by' or 'through this glass,' is in αἰνίγματι, in 'a riddle,' in darkness and obscurity. And speaking of himself, who surely was much more clear-sighted than any now living, he tells us, that he saw but ἐκ μέρους, 'in part;' he saw but the back-parts of heavenly things; ver. 12. and compares all the knowledge he had attained of God, to that he had of things when he was a child; ver. 11. it is a μέρος, short of the τὸ τέλειον: yea, such as καταργηθήσεται, 'it shall be destroyed,' or done away. We know what weak, feeble, uncertain notions and apprehensions, children have of things of any abstruse consideration: how when they grew up with any improvements of parts and abilities those conceptions vanish, and they are ashamed of them. It is the commendation of a child to love, honour, believe, and obey his father; but for his science and notions, his father knows his childishness and folly. Notwithstanding all our confidence of high attainments, all our notions of God are but childish in respect of his infinite perfections. We lisp and babble, and say we know not what, for the most part, in our most accurate, as we think, conceptions and notions of God. We may love, honour, believe, and obey our father, and therewith he accepts our childish thoughts, for they are but childish. We

[d] Ἀνακεκαλυμμένῳ προσώπῳ.

see but his back-parts, we know but little of him. Hence is that promise, wherewith we are so often supported, and comforted in our distress; 'We shall see him as he is;' we shall 'see him face to face;' 'know as we are known; comprehend that for which we are comprehended;' 1 Cor. xv. 12. 1 John iii. 2. and positively, 'Now we see him not:' all concluding that here we see but his back-parts, not as he is, but in a dark, obscure representation; not in the perfection of his glory.

The queen of Sheba had heard much of Solomon, and framed many great thoughts of his magnificence, in her mind thereupon; but when she came and saw his glory, she was forced to confess, that the one half of the truth had not been told her. We may suppose that we have here attained great knowledge, clear and high thoughts of God; but alas! when he shall bring us into his presence we shall cry out, we never knew him as he is. The thousandth part of his glory and perfection and blessedness, never entered into our hearts.

The apostle tells us, 1 John iii. 2. that 'we know not what we ourselves shall be;' what we shall find ourselves in the issue; much less will it enter into our hearts to conceive, what God is, and what we shall find him to be. Consider either him who is to be known, or the way whereby we know him; and this will farther appear.

(1.) We know so little of God, because it is God who is thus to be known; that is, he who hath described himself to us very much by this, that we cannot know him; what else doth he intend where he calls himself invisible, incomprehensible, and the like? that is, he whom we do not, cannot know as he is: and our farther progress consists more in knowing what he is not, than what he is. Thus is he described to be immortal, infinite; that is, he is not as we are, mortal, finite, and limited. Hence is that glorious description of him, 1 Tim. vi. 16. 'Who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see.' His light is such as no creature can approach unto: he is not seen, not because he cannot be seen, but because we cannot bear the sight of him. The light of God, in whom is no darkness, forbids all access to him by any creature whatever: we who cannot be-

hold the sun in its glory, are too weak to bear the beams of infinite brightness. On this consideration, as was said, the wise man professeth himself 'a very beast, and not to have the understanding of a man;' Prov. xxx. 2. that is, he knew nothing in comparison of God; so that he seemed to have lost all his understanding, when once he came to the consideration of him, his work, and his ways.

In this consideration, let our souls descend to some particulars.

[1.] For the being of God; we are so far from a knowledge of it, so as to be able to instruct one another therein by words and expressions of it, as that to frame any conceptions in our mind, with such species and impressions of things, as we receive the knowledge of all other things by, is to make an idol to ourselves, and so to worship a god of our own making, and not the God that made us. We may as well and as lawfully hew him out of wood, or stone, as form him a being in our minds, suited to our apprehensions. The utmost of the best of our thoughts of the being of God, is, that we can have no thoughts of it. Our knowledge of a being is but low, when it mounts no higher, but only to know that we know it not.

[2.] There be some things of God, which he himself hath taught us to speak of, and to regulate our expressions of them; but when we have so done, we see not the things themselves, we know them not: to believe and admire is all that we attain to. We profess, as we are taught, that God is infinite, omnipotent, eternal: and we know what disputes and notions there are about omnipresence, immensity, infiniteness, and eternity. We have, I say, words and notions about these things, but as to the things themselves, what do we know? What do we comprehend of them? Can the mind of man do any more but swallow itself up in an infinite abyss, which is as nothing; give itself up to what it cannot conceive, much less express? Is not our understanding brutish in the contemplation of such things? And is as if it were not? Yea, the perfection of our understanding, is, not to understand, and to rest there: they are but the back-parts of eternity and infiniteness that we have a glimpse of. What shall I say of the Trinity, or the subsistence of distinct persons in the same individual essence? a mystery, by many de-

nied because by none understood; a mystery, whose every letter is mysterious. Who can declare the generation of the Son, the procession of the Spirit, or the difference of the one from the other? But I shall not farther instance in particulars. That infinite and inconceivable distance that is between him and us, keeps us in the dark as to any sight of his face, or clear apprehension of his perfections. We know him rather by what he does, than by what he is; by his doing us good, than by his essential goodness, and how little a portion of him, as Job speaks, is hereby discovered?

2. We know little of God, because it is faith alone whereby here we know him; I shall not now discourse about the remaining impressions on the hearts of all men by nature, that there is a God, nor what they may rationally be taught concerning that God, from the works of his creation and providence, which they see and behold; it is confessedly, and that upon the woful experience of all ages, so weak, low, dark, confused, that none ever on that account glorified God as they ought; but notwithstanding all their knowledge of God, were indeed without God in the world.

The chief, and upon the matter, almost only acquaintance we have with God, and his dispensations of himself, is by faith. 'He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him;' Heb. xi. 6. our knowledge of him, and his rewarding (the bottom of our obedience or coming to him), is believing. 'We walk by faith, and not by sight;' 2 Cor. v. 7. διὰ πίστεως οὐ διὰ εἴδους· by faith, and so by faith, as not to have any express idea, image, or species of that which we believe; faith is all the argument we have of things not seen; Heb. xi. 1. I might here insist upon the nature of it, and from all its concomitants and concernments manifest, that we know but the back-parts of what we know by faith only. As to its rise, it is built purely upon the testimony of him, whom we have not seen: as the apostle speaks, 'How can ye love him whom ye have not seen?' that is, whom you know not, but by faith, that he is: faith receives all upon his testimony, whom it receives to be, only on his own testimony. As to its nature it is an assent upon testimony, not an evidence upon demonstration; and the object of it is, as was said before, above us. Hence our faith, as was formerly observed,

is called a 'seeing darkly as in a glass:' all that we know this way (and all that we know of God, we know this way) is but low, and dark, and obscure.

But you will say, all this is true, but yet it is only so to them that know not God; perhaps as he is revealed in Jesus Christ: with them who do so it is otherwise. It is true, 'No man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son he hath revealed him;' John i. 17, 18. and 'the Son of God is now come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true;' 1 John v. 20. The illumination of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, shineth upon believers; 2 Cor. iv. 4. yea, and 'God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, shines into their hearts to give them the knowledge of his glory in the face of his Son;' ver. 6. So that 'though we were darkness, yet we are now light in the Lord;' Eph. v. 8. And the apostle says, 'We all with open face behold the glory of the Lord;' 2 Cor. iii. 18. and we are now so far from being in such darkness, or at such a distance from God, that 'our communion and fellowship is with the Father and the Son;' 1 John i. 3. the light of the gospel whereby now God is revealed is glorious; not a star, but the sun in his beauty is risen upon us, and the veil is taken from our faces; so that though unbelievers, yea, and perhaps some weak believers, may be in some darkness, yet those of any growth, or considerable attainments have a clear sight and view of the face of God in Jesus Christ.

To which I answer,

1. The truth is we all of us know enough of him to love him more than we do, to delight in him and serve him, believe him, obey him, put our trust in him above all that we have hitherto attained. Our darkness and weakness is no plea for our negligence and disobedience. Who is it that hath walked up to the knowledge that he hath had of the perfections, excellencies and will of God? God's end in giving us any knowledge of himself here, is that we may glorify him as God; that is, love him, serve him, believe and obey him, give him all the honour and glory that is due from poor sinful creatures, to a sin-pardoning God and Creator; we must all acknowledge that we were never thoroughly transformed into the image of that knowledge which we have had. And

had we used our talents well, we might have been trusted with more.

2. Comparatively; that knowledge which we have of God by the revelation of Jesus Christ in the gospel, is exceeding eminent and glorious. It is so in comparison of any knowledge of God, that might otherwise be attained, or was delivered in the law under the Old Testament, which had but the shadow of good things, not the express image of them; this the apostle pursues at large, 2 Cor. iii. Christ hath now in these last days, revealed the Father from his own bosom, declared his name, made known his mind, will, and council in a far more clear, eminent, distinct manner, than he did formerly, whilst he kept his people under the pedegogy of the law, and this is that which for the most part is intended in the places before-mentioned; the clear, perspicuous delivery and declaration of God and his will in the gospel, is expressly exalted in comparison of any other way of revelation of himself.

3. The difference between believers and unbelievers as to knowledge, is not so much in the matter of their knowledge, as in the manner of knowing. Unbelievers, some of them may know more, and be able to say more of God, his perfections and his will, than many believers; but they know nothing as they ought, nothing in a right manner, nothing spiritually and savingly; nothing with a holy, heavenly, light. The excellency of a believer is not, that he hath a large apprehension of things, but that what he doth apprehend, which perhaps may be very little, he sees it in the light of the Spirit of God, in a saving soul-transforming light: and this is that which gives us communion with God, and not prying thoughts, or curious raised notions.

4. Jesus Christ by his word and Spirit reveals to the hearts of all his, God as a Father, as a God in covenant, as a rewarder, every way sufficiently to teach us to obey him here, and to lead us to his bosom, to lie down there in the fruition of him to eternity. But yet now,

b. Notwithstanding all this, it is but a little portion we know of him, we see but his back-parts. For,

'1.) The intendment of all gospel revelation is not to
il God's essential glory, that we should see him as he
; merely to declare so much of him as he knows suf-

ficient to be a bottom of our faith, love, obedience, and coming to him : that is, of the faith which here he expects from us. Such services as beseem poor creatures in the midst of temptations ; but when he calls us to eternal admiration and contemplation, without interruption, he will make a new manner of discovery of himself, and the whole shape of things, as it now lies before us, will depart as a shadow.

(2.) We are dull and slow of heart to receive the things that are in the word revealed. God by our infirmity and weakness, keeping us in continual dependance on him, for teachings and revelations of himself out of his word, never in this world bringing any soul to the utmost of what is from the word to be made out and discovered; so that although the way of revelation in the gospel be clear and evident, yet we know little of the things themselves that are revealed.

Let us then revive the use and intendment of this consideration; will not a due apprehension of this inconceivable greatness of God, and that infinite distance wherein we stand from him, fill the soul with a holy and awful fear of him ; so as to keep it in a frame, unsuited to the thriving or flourishing of any lust whatever? Let the soul be continually wonted to reverential thoughts of God's greatness and omnipresence, and it will be much upon its watch, as to any undue deportments; consider him with whom you have to do ; even 'our God is a consuming fire;' and in your greatest abashments at his presence and eye, know that your very nature is too narrow to bear apprehensions suitable to his essential glory.

CHAP. XIII.

The ninth direction. When the heart is disquieted by sin, speak no peace to it, until God speak it. Peace, without detestation of sin, unsound. So is peace measured out unto ourselves. How we may know when we measure our peace unto ourselves. Directions as to that inquiry. The vanity of speaking peace slightly. Also of doing it on one singular account, not universally.

NINTHLY, In case God disquiet the heart about the guilt of its distempers, either in respect of its root and indwelling,

or in respect of any eruptions of it, take heed thou speakest not peace to thyself before God speaks it; but hearken what he says to thy soul. This is our next direction; without the observation whereof, the heart will be exceedingly exposed to the deceitfulness of sin.

This is a business of great importance. It is a sad thing for a man to deceive his own soul herein. All the warnings God gives us in tenderness to our souls, to try and examine ourselves, do tend to the preventing of this great evil of speaking peace groundlessly to ourselves, which is upon the issue to bless ourselves, in an opposition to God. It is not my business to insist upon the danger of it, but to help believers to prevent it, and to let them know when they do so.

To manage this direction aright observe,

1. That as it is the great prerogative and sovereignty of God, to give grace to whom he pleases ('He hath mercy on whom he will;' Rom. ix. 16. and among all the sons of men, he calls whom he will, and sanctifies whom he will), so among those so called and justified, and whom he will save, he yet reserves this privilege to himself, to speak peace to whom he pleaseth, and in what degree he pleaseth, even amongst them on whom he hath bestowed grace. He is the God of all consolation, in an especial manner in his dealing with believers: that is, of the good things that he keeps locked up in his family, and gives out of it to all his children at his pleasure. This the Lord insists on, Isa. lvii. 16—18. it is the case under consideration that is there insisted on. When God says he will heal their breaches and disconsolations, he assumes this privilege to himself in an especial manner, 'I create it;' ver. 19. even in respect of these poor wounded creatures I create it, and according to my sovereignty make it out as I please.

Hence as it is with the collation of grace in reference to them that are in the state of nature; God doth it in great curiosity, and his proceedings therein in taking and leaving, as to outward appearances, quite besides and contrary oft-times to all probable expectations; so is it in his communications of peace and joy in reference unto them that are in te of grace; he gives them out oft-times quite besides pectation, as to any appearing grounds of his dispen-

2. As God creates it for whom he pleaseth, so it is the prerogative of Christ to speak it home to the conscience. Speaking to the church of Laodicea, who had healed her wounds falsely, and spoke peace to herself when she ought not, he takes to himself that title, 'I am the Amen, the faithful witness;' Rev. iii. 14. He bears testimony concerning our condition as it is indeed; we may possibly mistake, and trouble ourselves in vain, or flatter ourselves upon false grounds, but he is the Amen, the faithful witness; and what he speaks of our state and condition, that it is indeed. Isa. xi. 3. He is said not to judge according to the sight of the eye, not according to any outward appearance, or any thing that may be subject to a mistake, as we are apt to do; but he shall judge and determine every cause as it is indeed.

Take these two previous observations, and I shall give some rules whereby men may know whether God speaks peace to them, or whether they speak peace to themselves only.

1. Men certainly speak peace to themselves, when their so doing is not attended with the greatest detestation imaginable of that sin in reference whereunto they do speak peace to themselves, and abhorrency of themselves for it. When men are wounded by sin, disquieted and perplexed, and knowing that there is no remedy for them, but only in the mercies of God, through the blood of Christ, do therefore look to him, and to the promises of the covenant in him, and thereupon quiet their hearts that it shall be well with them, and that God will be exalted, that he may be gracious to them, and yet their souls are not wrought to the greatest detestation of the sin or sins, upon the account whereof they are disquieted, this is to heal themselves, and not to be healed of God. This is but a great and strong wind, that the Lord is nigh unto, but the Lord is not in the wind. When men do truly look upon Christ whom they have pierced, without which there is no healing or peace, they will mourn; Zech. xii. 10. they will mourn for him, even upon this account, and detest the sin that pierced him. When we go to Christ for healing, faith eyes him peculiarly as one pierced. Faith takes several views of Christ, according to the occasions of address to him, and communion with him that it hath. Sometimes it views his holiness, sometimes his power, sometimes his love, his favour with

his Father. And when it goes for healing and peace, it looks especially on the blood of the covenant, on his sufferings; for by his 'stripes are we healed, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him;' Isa. liii. 5. when we look for healing, his stripes are to be eyed; not in the outward story of them, which is the course of Popish devotionists, but in the love, kindness, mystery, and design of the cross; and when we look for peace, his chastisements must be in our eye. Now this, I say, if it be done according to the mind of God, and in the strength of that Spirit which is poured out on believers, it will beget a detestation of that sin or sins, for which healing and peace is sought. So Ezek. xvi. 60, 61. 'Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant.' And what then? 'Then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed.' When God comes home to speak peace in a sure covenant of it, it fills the soul with shame for all the ways whereby it hath been alienated from him. And one of the things that the apostle mentions as attending that godly sorrow, which is accompanied with repentance unto salvation, never to be repented of, is revenge: 'Yea, what revenge?' 2 Cor. vii. 11. They reflected on their miscarriages with indignation and revenge for their folly in them. When Job comes up to a thorough healing, he cries, 'Now I abhor myself;' Job xlii. 6. and until he did so, he had no abiding peace. He might perhaps have made up himself with that doctrine of free grace which was so excellently preached by Elihu, chap. xxxiii. from ver. 14. unto 29. but he had then but skinned his wounds, he must come to self-abhorrency if he come to healing. So was it with those in Psal. lxxviii. 33. 35. in their great trouble and perplexity, for and upon the account of sin; I doubt not but upon address they made to God in Christ (for that so they did, is evident from the titles they gave him, they call him their rock and their redeemer, two words every where pointing out the Lord Christ) they speak peace to themselves, but was it sound and abiding? No, it passed away as the early dew, God speaks not one word of peace to their souls. But why had they not peace? Why, because in their address to od, they flattered him: but how doth that appear? ver. 37. heir heart was not right with him, neither were they

steadfast:' they had not a detestation nor relinquishment of that sin in reference whereunto they spake peace to themselves. Let a man make what application he will for healing and peace, let him do it to the true physician, let him do it the right way, let him quiet his heart in the promises of the covenant; yet when peace is spoken, if it be not attended with the detestation and abhorrency of that sin, which was the wound, and caused the disquietment, this is no peace of God's creating, but of our own purchasing. It is but a skinning over the wound, whilst the core lies at the bottom, which will putrify, and corrupt, and corrode, until it break out again, with noisomeness, vexation, and danger. Let not poor souls that walk in such a path as this, who are more sensible of the trouble of sin, than of the pollution of uncleanness that attend it; who address themselves for mercy, yea, to the Lord in Christ, they address themselves for mercy, but yet will keep the sweet morsel of their sin under their tongue; let them, I say, never think to have true and solid peace. For instance, thou findest thy heart running out after the world, and it disturbs thee in thy communion with God; the Spirit speaks expressly to thee, 'He that loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him.'[a] This puts thee on dealing with God in Christ for the healing of thy soul, the quieting of thy conscience; but yet withal a thorough detestation of the evil itself abides not upon thee; yea, perhaps that is liked well enough, but only in respect of the consequences of it: perhaps thou mayest be saved, yet as through fire, and God will have some work with thee before he hath done, but thou wilt have little peace in this life, thou wilt be sick and fainting all thy days; Isa. lvii. 17. This is a deceit that lies at the root of the peace of many professors, and wastes it: they deal with all their strength about mercy and pardon; and seem to have great communion with God in their so doing; they lie before him, bewail their sins and follies, that any one would think, yea, they think themselves that surely they and their sins are now parted, and so receive in mercy that satisfies their hearts for a little season; but when a thorough search comes to be made, there hath been some secret reserve for the folly or follies treated about; at least there hath not been that thorough ab-

[a] 1 John ii. 15.

horrency of it, which is necessary; and their whole peace is quickly discovered to be weak and rotten; scarce abiding any longer than the words of begging it are in their mouths.

2. When men measure out peace to themselves upon the conclusions that their convictions and rational principles will carry them out unto; this is a false peace and will not abide. I shall a little explain what I mean hereby. A man hath got a wound by sin, he hath a conviction of some sin upon his conscience, he hath not walked uprightly as becometh the gospel; all is not well and right between God and his soul. He considers now what is to be done; light he hath, and knows what path he must take, and how his soul hath been formerly healed. Considering that the promises of God are the outward means of application for the healing of his sores, and quieting of his heart, he goes to them, searches them out, finds out some one, or more of them, whose literal expressions are directly suited to his condition: says he to himself, God speaks in this promise, here I will take myself a plaister, as long and broad as my wound, and so brings the word of the promise to his condition, and sets him down in peace. This is another appearance upon the mount, the Lord is near, but the Lord is not in it. It hath not been the work of the Spirit, who alone can convince us of sin and righteousness and judgment;[b] but the mere actings of the intelligent rational soul. As there are three sorts of lives, we say, the vegetative, the sensitive, and the rational or intelligent: some things have only the vegetative, some the sensitive also, and that includes the former; some have the rational, which takes in and supposes both the other. Now he that hath the rational, doth not only act suitably to that principle, but also to both the others he grows and is sensible. It is so with men in the things of God; some are mere natural and rational men; some have a superadded conviction with illumination; and some are truly regenerate. Now he that hath the latter hath also both the former; and therefore he acts sometimes upon the principles of the rational, sometimes upon the principles of the enlightened man. His true spiritual life is not the principle of all his motions; he acts not always in the strength thereof, neither are all his fruits from that root. In this case that I

[b] John xvi. 8.

speak of, he acts merely upon the principle of conviction and illumination, whereby his first naturals are heightened; but the Spirit breathes not at all upon all these waters. Take an instance: suppose the wound and disquiet of the soul to be upon the account of relapses, which whatever the evil or folly be, though for the matter of it never so small, yet there are no wounds deeper than those that are given the soul on that account, nor disquietments greater. In the perturbation of his mind, he finds out that promise, Isa. lv. 7. 'The Lord will have mercy, and our God will abundantly pardon;' he will multiply or add to pardon; he will do it again and again; or that in Hos. xiv. 4. 'I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely.' This the man considers, and thereupon concludes peace to himself; whether the Spirit of God make the application or no, whether that gives life and power to the letter or no, that he regards not. He doth not hearken whether God the Lord speak peace. He doth not wait upon God, who perhaps yet hides his face, and sees the poor creature stealing peace, and running away with it, knowing that the time will come, when he will deal with him again, and call him to a new reckoning;[c] when he shall see that it is in vain to go one step, where God doth not take him by the hand.

I see here indeed sundry other questions upon this arising and interposing themselves; I cannot apply myself to them all: one I shall a little speak to.

It may be said, then, Seeing that this seems to be the path that the Holy Spirit leads us in, for the healing of our wounds, and quieting of our hearts, how shall we know when we go alone ourselves, and when the Spirit also doth accompany us?

Ans. 1. If any of you are out of the way upon this account, God will speedily let you know it; for besides that you have his promise, that the 'meek he will guide in judgment, and teach them his way;' Psal. xxv. 9. he will not let you always err. He will, I say, not suffer your nakedness to be covered with fig-leaves, but take them away and all the peace you have in them, and will not suffer you to settle on such lees; you shall quickly know your wound is not healed. That is, you shall speedily know whether or no it be

[c] Hos. xi. 3.

thus with you by the event; the peace you thus get and obtain, will not abide. Whilst the mind is overpowered by its own convictions there is no hold for disquietments to fix upon. Stay a little and all these reasonings will grow cold, and vanish before the face of the first temptation that arises. But;

2. This course is commonly taken without waiting; which is the grace, and that peculiar acting of faith, which God calls for to be exercised in such a condition. I know God doth sometimes come in upon the soul instantly, in a moment as it were, wounding and healing it; as I am persuaded it was in the case of David, when he cut off the lap of Saul's garment: but ordinarily in such a case God calls for[d] waiting and labouring, attending as the eye of a servant upon his master; says the prophet Isaiah, chap. viii. 17. 'I will wait upon the Lord, who hideth his face from Jacob.' God will have his children lie awhile at his door, when they have run from his house, and not instantly rush in upon him; unless he take them by the hand, and pluck them in, when they are so ashamed that they dare not come to him. Now self-healers, or men that speak peace to themselves, do commonly make haste; they will not tarry: they do not hearken what God speaks, but on they will go to be healed.[e]

3. Such a course, though it may quiet the conscience and the mind, the rational concluding part of the soul, yet it doth not sweeten the heart, with rest and gracious contentation. The answer it receives, is much like that Elisha gave Naaman, 'Go in peace;'[f] it quieted his mind, but I must question whether it sweetened his heart, or gave him any joy in believing, other than the natural joy that was then stirred in him upon his healing. 'Do not my words do good?' saith the Lord; Mich. ii. 7. when God speaks, there is not only truth in his words, that may answer the conviction of our understandings, but also they do good, they bring that which is sweet and good and desirable to the will and affections; by them the soul returns unto its rest, Psal. cxvi. 7.

4. Which is worst of all; it amends not the life, it heals evil, it cures not the distemper: when God speaks [illegible] guides and keeps the soul that it turn not again to [illegible] When we speak it ourselves, the heart is not taken

[illegible] Psal. cxvi. 7. [d] Isa. viii. 16. [e] 2 Kings v. 19. [f] Psal. lxxxv. 8.

off the evil. Nay, it is the readiest course in the world to bring a soul into a trade of backsliding. If upon thy plaistering thyself, thou findest thyself rather animated to the battle again, than utterly weaned from it, it is too palpable that thou hast been at work with thine own soul, but Jesus Christ and his Spirit were not there. Yea, and oftentimes nature having done its work, will ere a few days are over, come for its reward; and having been active in the work of healing, will be ready to reason for a new wounding. In God's speaking peace there comes along so much sweetness, and such a discovery of his love as is a strong obligation on the soul, no more to deal perversely.[s]

3. We speak peace to ourselves, when we do it slightly. This the prophet complains of in some teachers; Jer. vi. 14. 'They have healed the wound of the daughter of my people slightly.' And it is so with some persons, they make the healing of their wounds a slight work, a look, a glance of faith to the promises does it, and so the matter is ended. The apostle tells us, that the word did not profit some, because 'it was not mixed with faith;' Heb. iv. 2. μὴ συγκεκραμένος, 'it was not well tempered' and mingled with faith. It is not a mere look to the word of mercy in the promise, but it must be mingled with faith, until it is incorporated into the very nature of it; and then indeed it doth good unto the soul: if thou hast had a wound upon thy conscience, which was attended with weakness and disquietness, which now thou art freed of, how camest thou so? I looked to the promises of pardon and healing, and so found peace; yea, but perhaps thou hast made too much haste, thou hast done it overtly, thou hast not fed upon the promise, so as to mix it with faith, to have got all the virtue of it diffused into thy soul; only thou hast done it slightly; thou wilt find thy wound ere it be long breaking out again, and thou shalt know that thou art not cured.

4. Whoever speaks peace to himself upon any one account, and at the same time hath another evil of no less importance lying upon his spirit, about which he hath had no dealing with God, that man cries peace when there is none. A little to explain my meaning: a man hath neglected a duty again and again; perhaps when in all righteousness it was due

[s] Luke xxii. 32.

from him, his conscience is perplexed, his soul wounded, he hath no quiet in his bones by reason of his sin; he applies himself for healing and finds peace. Yet in the meantime perhaps worldliness, or pride, or some other folly, wherewith the Spirit of God is exceedingly grieved, may lie in the bosom of that man, and they neither disturb him, nor he them. Let not that man think that any of his peace is from God. Then shall it be well with men when they have an equal respect to all God's commandments. God will justify us from our sins, but he will not justify the least sin in us; 'he is a God of purer eyes, than to behold iniquity.'

5. When men of themselves speak peace to their consciences, it is seldom that God speaks humiliation to their souls; God's peace is humbling peace, melting peace, as it was in the case of David;[h] never such deep humiliation as when Nathan brought him the tidings of his pardon.

But you will say, When may we take the comfort of a promise as our own, in relation to some peculiar wound for the quieting the heart?

1st. In general, when God speaks it, be it when it will, sooner or later, I told you before, he may do it in the very instant of the sin itself, and that with such irresistible power, that the soul must needs receive his mind in it. Sometimes he will make us wait longer; but when he speaks, be it sooner or later, be it when we are sinning or repenting, be the condition of our souls what they please, if God speak, he must be received. There is not any thing, that in our communion with him, the Lord is more troubled with us for, if I may so say, than our unbelieving fears that keep us off from receiving that strong consolation which he is so willing to give to us.

But you will say, We are where we were; when God speaks it, we must receive it, that is true, but how shall we know when he speaks?

1. I would we could all practically come up to this, to receive peace when we are convinced that God speaks it, and that it is our duty to receive it. But,

2. There is, if I may so say, a secret instinct in faith, whereby it knows the voice of Christ, when he speaks indeed; as the babe leaped in the womb, when the blessed

[h] Psal. li. 1.

virgin came to Elizabeth; faith leaps in the heart when Christ indeed draws nigh to it; 'My sheep,' says Christ, 'know my voice;' John x. 14. they know my voice, they are used to the sound of it and they know when his lips are opened to them, and are full of grace. The spouse was in a sad condition, Cant. v. 2. asleep in security, but yet as soon as Christ speaks, she cries, 'It is the voice of my beloved that speaks;' she knew his voice, and was so acquainted with communion with him, that instantly she discovers him, and so will you also; if you exercise yourselves to acquaintance and communion with him, you will easily discern between his voice and the voice of a stranger. And take this κριτήριον with you; when he doth speak, he speaks as never man spake; he speaks with power, and one way or other will make your hearts burn within you, as he did to the disciples, Luke xxii. he doth it by putting in his hand at the hole of the door, Cant. v. 4. his Spirit into your hearts to seize on you.

He that hath his senses exercised to discern good or evil, being increased in judgment and experience, by a constant observation of the ways of Christ's intercourse, the manner of the operations of the Spirit, and the effects it usually produceth, is the best judge for himself in this case.

2ndly. If the word of the Lord doth good to your souls he speaks it. If it humble, if it cleanse and be useful for those ends, for which promises are given; viz. to endear, to cleanse, to melt and bind to obedience, to self-emptiness, &c. But this is not my business; nor shall I farther divert in the pursuit of this direction; without the observation of it, sin will have great advantages towards the hardening of the heart.

CHAP. XIV.

The general use of the foregoing directions. The great direction for the accomplishment of the work aimed at. Act faith on Christ; the several ways whereby this may be done. Consideration of the fulness in Christ for relief proposed. Great expectations from Christ; grounds of these expectations. His mercifulness, his faithfulness. Event of such expectations. On the part of Christ. On the part of believers. Faith peculiarly to be acted on the death of Christ; Rom. vi. 3—6. *The work of the Spirit in this whole business.*

Now the considerations which I have hitherto insisted on are rather of things preparatory to the work aimed at, than such as will effect it. It is the heart's due preparation for the work itself, without which it will not be accomplished, that hitherto I have aimed at.

Directions for the work itself are very few; I mean that are peculiar to it. And they are these that follow.

1. Set faith at work on Christ for the killing of thy sin. His blood is the great sovereign remedy for sin-sick souls. Live in this, and thou wilt die a conqueror. Yea, thou wilt through the good providence of God, live to see thy lust dead at thy feet.

But thou wilt say, How shall faith act itself on Christ for this end and purpose? I say sundry ways.

(1.) By faith fill thy soul with a due consideration of that provision, which is laid up in Jesus Christ for this end and purpose, that all thy lusts, this very lust wherewith thou art entangled, may be mortified. By faith ponder on this, that though thou art no way able in or by thyself, to get the conquest over thy distemper, though thou art even weary of contending, and art utterly [h]ready to faint, yet that there is enough in Jesus Christ, to yield thee relief; Phil. iv. 13. It staid the prodigal when he was ready to faint, that yet there was bread enough in his father's house, though he was at a distance from it, yet it relieved him, and staid him, tha there it was. In thy greatest distress and anguish, consider that fulness of grace, those riches, those [i]treasures of strength, might, and help, that are laid up in him, for our support;

[h] Luke xvi. 17. [i] Isa. xl. 28—31.

John i. 16. Col. i. 19. Let them come into, and abide in thy mind. Consider that he is exalted and made 'a prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto Israel;' Acts v. 31. and if to give repentance, to give mortification, without which the other is not, nor can be. Christ tells us that we obtain purging grace by abiding in him; John xv. 3. To act faith upon the fulness that is in Christ for our supply, is an eminent way of abiding in Christ, for both our incision and abode is by faith; Rom. xi. 19, 20. Let then thy soul by faith be exercised with such thoughts and apprehensions as these: 'I am a poor, weak creature; unstable as water, I cannot excel; this corruption is too hard for me, and is at the very door of ruining my soul; and what to do I know not; my soul is become as parched ground and an habitation of dragons; I have made promises and broken them, vows and engagements have been as a thing of nought; many persuasions have I had, that I had got the victory and should be delivered, but I am deceived; so that I plainly see, that without some eminent succour and assistance, I am lost, and shall be prevailed on, to an utter relinquishment of God; but yet though this be my state and condition, yet let the hands that hang down be lifted up, and the feeble knees be strengthened; behold[i] the Lord Christ that hath all fulness of grace in his heart, all fulness of power in his hand; he is able to slay all these his enemies. There is sufficient provision in him for my relief and assistance: he can take my drooping dying soul and make me more than a conqueror.[k] 'Why sayest thou, O my soul, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding; he giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fail; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint;' Isa. xl. 49, &c. He can make the dry parched ground of my soul to become a pool, and my thirsty barren heart as springs of water: yea,

[i] John i. 16. Matt. xxviii. 18. [k] Rom. viii. 36.

he can make this habitation of dragons, this heart, so full of abominable lusts, and fiery temptations, to be a place for grass, and fruit to himself; Isa. xxxv. 7. So God staid Paul under his temptation, with the consideration of the sufficiency of his grace: 'My grace is sufficient for thee;' 2 Cor. xii. 9. Though he were not immediately so far made partaker of it, as to be freed from his temptation, yet the sufficiency of it in God, for that end and purpose, was enough to stay his spirit. I say then, by faith, be much in the consideration of that supply and the fulness of it, that is in Jesus Christ; and how he can at any time give thee strength and deliverance. Now if hereby thou dost not find success to a conquest, yet thou wilt be staid in the chariot, that thou shalt not fly out of the field until the battle be ended; thou wilt be kept from an utter despondency, and a lying down under thy unbelief; or a turning aside to false means and remedies that in the issue will not relieve thee. The efficacy of this consideration will be found only in the practice.

(2.) Raise up thy heart by faith to an expectation of relief from Christ; relief in this case from Christ is like the prophet's vision; Hab. ii. 3. 'It is for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, yet wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry;' though it may seem somewhat long to thee, whilst thou art under thy trouble and perplexity, yet it shall surely come in the appointed time of the Lord Jesus, which is the best season. If then thou canst raise up thy heart to a settled expectation of relief from Jesus Christ, if thine eyes are towards him, as the eyes of a 'servant to the hand of his master,'[l] when he expects to receive somewhat from him, thy soul shall be satisfied, he will assuredly deliver thee;[m] he will slay the lust, and thy latter end shall be peace; only look for it, at his hand, expect when and how he will do it. If you will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

But wilt thou say, What ground have I to build such an expectation upon, so that I may expect not to be deceived?

As thou hast necessity to put thee on this course, thou must be relieved and saved this way or none; to[n] whom wilt

[l] Psal. cxxiii. 2. [m] Isa. vii. 8. [n] John vi. 68.

thou go? so there are in the Lord Jesus innumerable things to encourage and engage thee to this expectation.

For the necessity of it, I have in part discovered it before, when I manifested that this is the work of faith, and of believers only. 'Without me,' says Christ, 'you can do nothing;' John xv. 15. speaking with especial relation to the purging of the heart from sin; ver. 2. mortification of any sin, must be by a supply of grace. Of ourselves we cannot do it. 'Now it hath pleased the Father that in Christ all fulness should dwell;' Col. i. 19. 'that of his fulness we might receive grace for grace;' John i. 16. He is the head, from whence the new man must have influences of life and strength, or it will decay every day. If [o]we are strengthened with might in the inner man, it is by Christ's dwelling in our hearts by faith; Eph. iii. 16, 17. That this work is not to be done without the Spirit, I have also shewed before. Whence then do we expect the Spirit? From whom do we look for him? Who hath promised him to us, having procured him for us? Ought not all our expectations to this purpose to be on Christ alone? Let this then be fixed upon thy heart, that if thou hast not relief from him, thou shalt never have any: all ways, endeavours, contendings, that are not animated by this expectation of relief from Christ and him only, are to no purpose, will do thee no good: yea, if they are any thing but supportments of thy heart in this expectation, or means appointed by himself, for the receiving help from him, they are in vain.

Now farther to engage thee to this expectation:

[1.] Consider his mercifulness, tenderness, and kindness, as he is our great high-priest, at the right hand of God. Assuredly he pities thee in thy distress; saith he, 'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you;' Isa. lxvi. 13. He hath the tenderness of a mother to a sucking child. Heb. ii. 17, 18. 'Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people; for in that himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted:' how is the ability of Christ upon the account of his suffering proposed to us? 'In that

[o] Col. i. 11.

he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able.' Did the sufferings and temptations of Christ add to his ability and power? Not doubtless, considered absolutely and in it itself; but the ability here mentioned, is such as hath readiness, proneness, willingness, to put itself forth accompanying of it; it is an ability of will against all dissuasions; he is able having suffered and being tempted, to break through all dissuasions to the contrary, to relieve poor tempted souls: δύναται βοηθῆσαι, 'He is able to help.' It is a metonomy of the effect. For he can now be moved to help having been so tempted. So chap. iv. 15, 16. 'For we have not a high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.' The exhortation of ver. 16. is the same that I am upon; namely, that we would entertain expectations of relief from Christ, which the apostle there calls χάριν εἰς εὔκαιρον βοήθειαν 'grace for seasonable help;' if ever, says the soul, help were seasonable, it would be so to me in my present condition. This is that which I long for, grace for seasonable help. I am ready to die, to perish, to be lost for ever; iniquity will prevail against me, if help come not in, says the apostle, expect this help, this relief, this grace from Christ; yea, but on what account? That which he lays down, ver. 15. and we may observe that the word, ver. 16. which we have translated to obtain, is λάβωμεν, ἵνα λάβωμεν ἔλεον, 'that we may receive it,' suitable and seasonable help will come in. I shall freely say, this one thing of establishing the soul by faith in expectation of relief from Jesus Christ,[p] on the account of his mercifulness as our high-priest, will be more available to the ruin of thy lust and distemper, and have a better and speedier issue, than all the ungodest means of self-maceration, that ever any of the sons of men engaged themselves into. Yea, let me add, that never any soul did, or shall perish by the power of any lust, sin or corruption, who could raise his soul by faith to an expectation of relief from Jesus Christ.[q]

4. Consider his faithfulness who hath promised, which will bear up and confirm thee in this waiting in an ex-

[p] Matt. xi. 28. [q] Isa. lv. 1—3. Rev. iii. 18.

pectation of relief. He hath promised to relieve in such cases 'and he will fulfil his word to the utmost. God tells us that his covenant with us, is like the ordinances of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, which have their certain courses; Jer. xxxi. 36. Thence David said that he watched for relief from God, 'as one watched for the morning,'[r] a thing that will certainly come in its appointed season; so will be thy relief from Christ. It will come in its season as the dew and rain upon the parched ground; for faithful is he who hath promised. Particular promises to this purpose are innumerable, with some of them, that seem peculiarly to suit his condition, let the soul be always furnished.

Now there are two eminent advantages which always attend this expectation of succour from Jesus Christ.

1st. It engages him to a full and speedy assistance; nothing doth more engage the heart of a man, to be useful and helpful to another, than his expectation of help from him, if justly raised and countenanced by him who is to give the relief. Our Lord Jesus hath raised our hearts by his kindness, care, and promises, to this expectation; certainly our rising up unto it, must needs be a great engagement upon him to assist us accordingly. This the psalmist gives us as an approved maxim, 'Thou Lord never forsakest them that put their trust in thee.' When the heart is once won to rest in God, to repose himself on him, he will assuredly satisfy it. He will never be as water that fails, nor hath he said at any time to the seed of Jacob, 'Seek ye my face in vain.' If Christ be chosen for the foundation of our supply he will not fail us.

2dly. It engages the heart to attend diligently to all ways and means whereby Christ is wont to communicate himself to the soul; and so takes in the real assistance of all graces and ordinances whatever. He that expects any thing from a man, applies himself to the ways and means whereby it may be obtained. The beggar that expects an alms, lies at his door or in his way, from whom he doth expect it. The way whereby, and the means wherein Christ communicates himself is, and are, his ordinances ordinarily; he that expects any thing from him, must attend upon him

[r] Psal. cxxx. 6.

therein. It is the expectation of faith that sets the heart on work. It is not an idle groundless hope that I speak of. If now there be any vigour, efficacy, and power, in prayer or sacrament to this end of mortifying sin, a man will assuredly be interested in it all, by this expectation of relief from Christ. On this account I reduce all particular actings, by prayer, meditation, and the like to this head; and so shall not farther insist on them when they are grounded on this bottom and spring from this root; they are of singular use to this purpose; and not else.

Now on this direction for the mortification of a prevailing distemper you may have a thousand 'probatum est's;' Who have walked with God under this temptation and have not found the use and success of it? I dare leave the soul under it, without adding any more. Only some particulars relating thereunto may be mentioned.

[2.] Act faith peculiarly upon the death, blood, and cross of Christ; that is, on Christ as crucified and slain; mortification of sin is peculiarly from the death of Christ. It is one peculiar, yea, eminent end of the death of Christ, which shall assuredly be accomplished by it. He died to destroy the works of the devil; whatever came upon our natures by his first temptation, whatever receives strength in our persons by his daily suggestions, Christ died to destroy it all. 'He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works;' Tit. ii. 14. This was his aim and investment (wherein he will not fail), in his giving himself for us. That we might be freed from the power of our sins, and purified from all our defiling lusts was his design. 'He gave himself for the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish;' Eph. v. 25—27. This is by virtue of his death, in various and several degrees shall be accomplished. Hence our washing, purging, [illegible] every where, ascribed to his blood; 1 John [illegible] Rev. [illegible]. That being sprinkled on us, [illegible] consciences from dead works to serve the living [illegible]. This is that we aim at, this we are in [illegible] our consciences may be purged from dead

works, that they may be rooted out, destroyed, and have place in us no more. This shall certainly be brought about by the death of Christ; there will virtue go out from thence to this purpose. Indeed all supplies of the Spirit, all communications of grace and power are from hence, as I have elsewhere[z] shewed. Thus the apostle states it; Rom. vi. 2. is the case proposed that we have in hand; 'How shall we that are dead in sin live any longer therein?' Dead to sin by profession; dead to sin by obligation to be so; dead to sin by a participation of virtue and power for the killing of it; dead to sin by union and interest in Christ, in and by whom it is killed; how shall we live therein? This he presses by sundry considerations, all taken from the death of Christ, in the ensuing verses. This must not be: ver. 3. 'Know you not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?' We have in baptism an evidence of our implantation into Christ; we are baptized into him; but what of him are we baptized into an interest in? His death, saith he; if indeed we are baptized into Christ, and beyond outward profession, we are baptized into his death. The explication of this, of one being baptized into the death of Christ, the apostle gives us, ver. 4. 6. 'Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.' This is, saith he, our being baptized into the death of Christ; namely, our conformity thereunto. To be dead unto sin, to have our corruptions mortified, as he was put to death for sin; so that as he was raised up to glory, we may be raised up to grace and newness of life. He tells us whence it is that we have this baptism into the death of Christ, ver. 6. and this is from the death of Christ itself; 'Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed;' συνεσταυρώθη, 'is crucified with him;' not in respect of time, but causality; we are crucified with him, meritoriously, in that he procured the Spirit for us, to mortify sin; efficiently,

[z] Communion with Christ, chap. 7, 8.

in that from his death virtue comes forth for our crucifying, in the way of representation and exemplars we shall assuredly be crucified unto sin, as he was for our sin. This is that the apostle intends; Christ by his death destroying the works of the devil, procuring the Spirit for us, hath so killed sin, as to its reign in believers, that it shall not obtain its end and dominion.

Then act faith on the death of Christ, and that under these two notions: First, In expectation of power; secondly, In endeavours for conformity[a]. For the first, the direction given in general may suffice; as to the latter, that of the apostle may give us some light into our direction; Gal. iii. 1. Let faith look on Christ in the gospel as he is set forth dying and crucified for us. Look on him under the weight[b] of our sins, praying, bleeding, dying: bring him in that condition into thy heart by faith; apply his blood so shed to thy corruptions; do this daily. I might draw out this consideration to a great length, in sundry particulars, but I must come to a close.

I have only then to add the heads of the work of the Spirit in this business of mortification, which is so peculiarly ascribed to him.

[2.] In one word: this whole work which I have described as our duty, is effected, carried on, and accomplished by the power of the Spirit, in all the parts and degrees of it; as

1st. He alone clearly and fully convinces the heart of the evil and guilt and danger of the corruption, lust, or sin to be mortified. Without this conviction, or whilst it is faint, that the heart can wrestle with it, or digest it, there will be no thorough work made. An unbelieving heart (as in part we have all such) will shift with any consideration, until it be over-powered by clear and evident convictions: now this is the proper work of the Spirit, 'he convinces of sin;' John xvi. 8. he alone can do it; if men's rational considerations, with the preaching of the letter, were able to convince them of sin, we should, it may be, see more convictions than we do. There comes by the preaching of the word and appre-

[a] Philip. iii. 10. Col. iii. 3. 1 Pet. i. 18.
[b] 1 Cor. xv. 31. 1 Pet. i. 16. v. 1, 2. Col. i. 3.

hension upon the understandings of men that they are sinners, that such and such things are sins, that themselves are guilty of them; but this light is not powerful, nor doth it lay hold on the practical principles of the soul, so as to conform the mind and will unto them, to produce effects suitable to such an apprehension. And therefore it is, that wise and knowing men, destitute of the Spirit, do not think those things to be sins at all, wherein the chief movings and actings of lust do consist. It is the Spirit alone that can do, that doth this work to the purpose. And this is the first thing that the Spirit doth in order to the mortification of any lust whatever; it convinces the soul of all the evil of it; cuts off all its pleas, discovers all its deceits, stops all its evasions, answers its pretences, makes the soul own its abomination, and lie down under the sense of it. Unless this be done all that follows is in vain.

2dly. The Spirit alone reveals unto us the fulness of Christ for our relief, which is the consideration that stays the heart from false ways, and from despairing despondency; 1 Cor. ii. 8.

3dly. The Spirit alone establishes the heart in expectation of relief from Christ; which is the great sovereign means of mortification, as hath been discovered; 2 Cor. i. 21.

4thly. The Spirit alone brings the cross of Christ into our hearts, with its sin-killing power; for by the Spirit are we baptized into the death of Christ.

5thly. The Spirit is the author and finisher of our sanctification; gives new supplies and influences of grace for holiness and sanctification, when the contrary principle is weakened and abated; Eph. iii. 16—18.

6thly. In all the soul's addresses to God in this condition, it hath supportment from the Spirit. Whence is the power, life, and vigour of prayer? Whence its efficacy to prevail with God? Is it not from the Spirit? He is the Spirit of supplication promised to them, 'who look on him whom they have pierced,' Zech. xii. 10. enabling them 'to pray with sighs and groans that cannot be uttered;' Rom. viii. 26. This is confessed to be the great medium or way of faith's prevailing with God. Thus Paul dealt with his temptation,

whatever it were; 'I besought God that it might depart from me.'[c] What is the work of the Spirit in prayer, whence, and how it gives us in assistance, and makes us to prevail, what we are to do that we may enjoy his help for that purpose, is not my present intendment to demonstrate.

[c] 2 Cor. xii. 8.

OF

TEMPTATION:

THE

NATURE AND POWER OF IT;

THE

DANGER OF ENTERING INTO IT;

AND

THE MEANS OF PREVENTING THAT DANGER:

WITH

A RESOLUTION OF SUNDRY CASES

THEREUNTO BELONGING.

Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.—Rev. iii. 10.

TO THE READER.

CHRISTIAN READER,

IF thou art in any measure awake in these days, wherein we live, and hast taken notice of the manifold, great, and various temptations wherewith all sorts of persons, that know the Lord, and profess his name, are beset, and whereunto they are continually exposed; with what success those temptations have obtained to the unspeakable scandal of the gospel, with the wounding and ruin of innumerable souls; I suppose thou wilt not inquire any farther after other reasons of the publishing of the ensuing warnings and directions; being suited to the times that pass over us, and thine own concernment in them. This I shall only say to those who think meet to persist in any such inquiry, that though my first engagement for the exposing of these meditations unto public view, did arise from the desires of some, whose avouching the interest of Christ in the world by personal holiness, and constant adhering to every thing that is made precious by its relation to him, have given them power over me, to require at any time services of greater importance; yet I dare not lay my doing of it so upon that account, as in the least to intimate, that with respect to the general state of things mentioned, I did not myself esteem it seasonable and necessary. The variety of outward providences and

dispensations, wherewith I have myself been exercised in this world, with the inward trials they have been attended withal, added to the observation that I have had advantages to make of the ways and walkings of others; their beginnings, progresses, and endings; their risings and falls in profession, and conversation, in darkness and light, have left such a constant sense and impression of the power and danger of temptations upon my mind and spirit, that without other pleas and pretences, I cannot but own a serious call unto men to beware, with a discovery of some of the most eminent ways and means of the prevalency of present temptations, to have been in my own judgment, in this season, needful. But now, reader, if thou art amongst them who takest no notice of these things, or carest not for them, who hast no sense of the efficacy and dangers of temptations in thine own walking and profession, nor hast observed the power of them upon others; who discernest not the manifold advantages that they have got in these days, wherein all things are shaken; nor hast been troubled or moved for the sad successes they had amongst professors; but supposest that all things are well within doors, and without, and would be better, couldst thou obtain fuller satisfaction to some of thy lusts, in the pleasures or profits of the world, I desire thee to know, that I write not for thee, nor do esteem thee a fit reader or judge of what is here written. Whilst all the issues of providential dispensations, in reference to the public concernments of these nations are perplexed and entangled, the footsteps of God lying in the deep, where his paths are not known; whilst in particular, unparalleled distresses, and strange pros-

perities are measured out to men, yea to professors; whilst a spirit of error, giddiness, and delusion, goes forth with such strength and efficacy, as it seems to have received a commission to go and prosper; whilst there are such divisions, strifes, emulations, attended with such evil surmises, wrath, and revenge, found amongst brethren; whilst the desperate issues and products of men's temptations are seen daily in partial and total apostacy, in the decay of love, the overthrow of faith, our days being filled with fearful examples of backsliding, such as former ages never knew; whilst there is a visible declension from reformation seizing upon the professing party of these nations, both as to personal holiness, and zeal for the interest of Christ. He that understands not that there is an hour of temptation come upon the world to try them that dwell in the earth, is doubtless either himself at present captivated under the power of some woful lust, corruption, or temptation, or is indeed stark blind, and knows not at all what it is to serve God in temptations. With such, then, I have not at present to do; for those who have in general a sense of these things, who also in some measure are able to consider that the plague is begun, that they may be farther awakened to look about them lest the infection have approached nearer to them by some secret and imperceptible ways, than they did apprehend; or lest they should be surprised at unawares hereafter by any of those temptations that in these days either waste at noon, or else walk in darkness, is the ensuing warning intended; and for the sake of them that mourn in secret, for all the abominations that are found among, and upon them that profess the gospel, and

who are under the conduct of the captain of their salvation, fighting and resisting the power of temptations, from what spring soever they rise, in themselves, are the ensuing directions proposed to consideration. That our faithful and merciful High Priest, who both suffered and was tempted, and is on that account touched with the feeling of our infirmities, would accompany this small discourse with seasonable supplies of his Spirit, and suitable mercy to them that shall consider it, that it may be useful to his servants for the ends whereunto it is designed, is the prayer of him, who received this handful of seed from his storehouse and treasure.

JOHN OWEN.

OF

TEMPTATION:

THE

NATURE AND POWER OF IT, &c.

CHAP. I.

The words of the text, that are the foundation of the ensuing discourse. The occasion of the words, with their dependance; the things specially aimed at in them. Things considerable in the words as to the general purpose in hand. Of the general nature of temptation wherein it consists. The special nature of temptation. Temptation taken actively and passively. How God tempts any. His ends in so doing. The way whereby he doth it: of temptation in its special nature: of the actions of it. The true nature of temptation stated.

Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation.
Matt. xxvi. 41.

THESE words of our Saviour are repeated with very little alteration in three evangelists; only whereas Matthew and Mark have recorded them as above written, Luke reporteth them thus; 'Arise and pray that you enter not into temptation;' so that the whole of his caution seems to have been; arise, watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation.

Solomon tells us of some, that 'lie down on the top of a mast in the midst of the sea;' Prov. xxiii. 34. Men overborne by security in the mouth of destruction. If ever poor souls lay down on the top of a mast in the midst of the sea, these disciples with our Saviour in the garden did so. Their master, at a little distance from them, was offering up prayers and supplications with strong cries, and tears; Heb. v. 4. being then taking into his hand, and beginning to[a] taste that cup that was filled with the curse and wrath due to their sins. The Jews armed for his and their destruction, being

[a] Heb. ii. 9. Gal. iii. 13. 2 Cor. v. 21.

but a little more distant from them, on the other hand. Our Saviour had a little before, informed them, that that night he should be betrayed, and be delivered up to be slain; they saw that he was sorrowful, and very heavy; ver. 37. Nay, he told them plainly, that his 'soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death;' ver. 83. and therefore entreated them to tarry, and watch with him, now he was dying, and that for them. In this condition, leaving them but a little space, like men forsaken of all love towards him, or care of themselves, they fall fast asleep. Even the best of saints, being left to themselves, will quickly appear to be less than men, to be nothing. All our own strength is weakness, and all our wisdom folly. Peter being one of them, who but a little before, had with so much self-confidence affirmed, that though all men forsook him, yet he never would so do; our Saviour expostulates the matter in particular with him; ver. 40. 'He saith unto Peter, could you not watch with me one hour?' as if he should have said, Art thou he, Peter, who but now boastedst of thy resolution, never to forsake me? Is it likely that thou shouldst hold out therein, when thou canst not watch with me one hour? Is this thy dying for me; to be dead in security, when I am dying for thee? And indeed it would be an amazing thing, to consider that Peter should make so high a promise, and be immediately so careless and remiss in the pursuit of it; but that we find the root of the same treachery abiding and working in our own hearts, and do see the fruit of it brought forth every day: the most noble engagements unto obedience, quickly ending in deplorable negligence; Rom. vii. 18.

In this estate our Saviour admonishes them of their condition, their weakness, their danger, and stirs them up to a prevention of that ruin, which lay at the door: saith he, 'Arise, watch and pray.'

I shall not insist on the particular aimed at here by our Saviour, in this caution to them that were then present with him; the great temptation that was coming on them, from the scandal of the cross, was doubtless in his eye; but I shall consider the words as containing a general direction to all the disciples of Christ, in their following of him throughout all generations.

There are three things in the words:

First, The evil cautioned against: temptation.

Secondly, The means of its prevalency; by our entering into it.

Thirdly, The way of preventing it; watch and pray.

It is not in my thoughts to handle the common-place of temptation, but only the danger of them in general, with the means of preventing that danger. Yet that we may know what we affirm, and whereof we speak, some concernments of the general nature of temptation may be premised.

First, For the general nature of tempting and temptation, it lies among things indifferent; to try, to experiment, to prove, to pierce a vessel, that the liquor that is in it may be known, is as much as is signified by it. Hence God is said sometime to tempt; and we are commanded as our duty to tempt, or try, or search ourselves, to know what is in us; and to pray that God would do so also. So temptation is like a knife, that may either cut the meat, or the throat of a man; it may be his food or his poison, his exercise or his destruction.

Secondly, Temptation in its special nature, as it denotes any evil, is considered, either actively, as it leads to evil, or passively, as it hath an evil and suffering in it; so temptation is taken for affliction; James. i. 2. For in that sense, we are to count it all joy when we fall into temptation, in the other, that we enter not into it.

Again, actively considered, it either denotes in the tempter, a design for the bringing about of the special end of temptation, namely, a leading into evil; so it is said, that 'God tempts no man,' James i. 13. with a design for sin, as such: or the general nature, and end of temptation, which is trial; so God tempted Abraham; Gen. xxi. 1. And he proveth or tempteth by false prophets; Deut. xiii. 3.

Now as to God's tempting of any, two things are to be considered:

1. The end why he doth it.

2. The way whereby he doth it.

For the first, his general ends are two:

(1.) He doth it to shew unto man what is in him, that is, the man himself: and that either as to his grace, or to his corruption (I speak not now of it, as it may have a place and bear a part in judiciary obduration). Grace and corruption

lie deep in the heart; men oftentimes deceive themselves in the search after the one, or the other of them. When we give vent to the soul, to try what grace is there, corruption comes out; and when we search for corruption, grace appears; so is the soul kept in uncertainty: we fail in our trials. God comes with a gage, that goes to the bottom. He sends his instruments of trial into the bowels, and the inmost parts of the soul, and lets man see what is in him, of what metal he is constituted. Thus he tempted Abraham, to shew him his faith. Abraham knew not what faith he had (I mean, what power and vigour was in his faith) until God drew it out by that great trial and temptation;[b] when God says he knew it, he made Abraham know it. So he tried Hezekiah, to discover his pride: God left him that he might see what was in his heart; 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. he knew not that he had such a proud heart; so apt to be lifted up, as he appeared to have, until God tried him, and so let out his filth, and poured it out before his face. The issues of such discoveries to the saints in thankfulness, humiliation, and treasuring up of experiences, I shall not treat of.

(2.) God doth it to shew himself unto man, and that,

[1.] In a way of preventing grace; a man shall see that it is God alone who keeps from all sin. Until we are tempted, we think we live on our own strength. Though all men do this or that, we will not. When the trial comes, we quickly see, whence is our preservation by standing, or falling. So was it in the case of Abimeleck; Gen. xxiii. 6. 'I withheld thee.'

[2.] In a way of renewing grace. He would have the temptation continue with St. Paul, that he might reveal himself to him in the sufficiency of his renewing grace; 2 Cor. xii. 9. We know not the power and strength that God puts forth in our behalf, nor what is the sufficiency of his grace, until comparing the temptation with our own weakness, it appears unto us. The efficacy of an antidote is found when poison hath been taken, and the preciousness of medicines is made known by diseases. We shall never know what strength there is in grace, if we know not what strength there is in temptation. We must be tried, that we may be made sensible of being preserved. And many other

[b] Gen. xxii. 12.

good and gracious ends he hath, which he accomplisheth towards his saints by his trials and temptations, not now to be insisted on.

2. For the ways whereby God accomplisheth this his search, trial, or temptation, these are some of them:

(1.) He puts men on great duties, such as they cannot apprehend that they have any strength for, nor indeed have. So he tempted Abraham, by calling him to that duty of sacrificing his Son; a thing absurd to reason, bitter to nature, and grievous to him on all accounts whatever. Many men know not what is in them, or rather what is ready for them, until they are put upon what seems utterly above their strength; indeed, upon what is really above their strength. The duties that God in an ordinary way requires at our hands, are not proportioned to what strength we have in ourselves, but to what help and relief is laid up for us in Christ; and we are to address ourselves to the greatest performances, with a settled persuasion that we have not ability for the least. This is the law of grace; but yet when any duty is required that is extraordinary, that is a secret not often discovered; in the yoke of Christ it is a trial, a temptation.

(2.) By putting them upon great sufferings. How many have unexpectedly found strength to die at a stake, to endure tortures for Christ; yet their call to it was a trial. This Peter tells us is one way whereby we are brought into trying temptations; 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. our temptations arise from the fiery trial, and yet the end is but a trial of our faith.

(3.) By his providential disposing of things so, as that occasions unto sin will be administered unto men, which is the case mentioned, Deut. xiii. 3. and innumerable other instances may be adjoined.

Now they are not properly the temptations of God, as coming from him, with his end upon them that are here intended: and therefore I shall set these apart from our present consideration; that is then temptation in its special nature, as it denotes an active efficiency towards sinning (as it is managed with evil, unto evil) that I intend.

In this sense, temptation may proceed either singly from Satan, or the world, or other men in the world, or from our-

selves, or jointly from all, or some of them, in their several combinations.

[1.] Satan tempts sometimes singly by himself, without taking advantage from the world, the things, or persons of it, or ourselves. So he deals in his injection of evil and blasphemous thoughts of God, into the hearts of the saints; which is his own work alone, without any advantage from the world, or our own hearts. For nature will contribute nothing thereunto, nor any thing that is in the world, nor any man of the world; for none can conceive a God and conceive evil of him. Herein Satan is alone in the sin and shall be so in the punishment. These fiery darts are prepared in the forge of his own malice, and shall with all their venom and poison be turned into his own heart for ever.

[2.] Sometimes he makes use of the world, and joins forces against us; without any helps from within. So he tempted our Saviour, by shewing him the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.[c] And the variety of the assistances he finds from the world, in persons, and things which I must not insist on, the innumerable instruments and weapons he takes from thence of all sorts, and at all seasons, are inexpressible.

[3.] Sometimes he takes in assistance from ourselves also. It is not with us, as it was with Christ, when Satan came to tempt him, he declares that he 'had nothing in him;' John xiv. 30. It is otherwise with us: he hath, for the compassing of most of his ends, a sure party within our own breasts; James i. 14, 15. Thus he tempted Judas; he was at work himself; he put it into his heart to betray Christ; Luke xxii. 3. he entered into him for that purpose, and he sets the world at work, the things of it, providing for him thirty pieces of silver;' ver. 5. 'They covenanted to give him money;' and the men of it, even the priests and the Pharisees; and calleth in the assistance of his own corruption; he was covetous, a thief, and had the bag.

I might also shew, how the world had our own corruptions to act singly by themselves, and jointly in conjunction with [illegible] and one another in this business of temptation. [illegible] h is; the principles, ways, and means, of temp-

[c] Matt. iv. 8.

tations, the kinds, degrees, efficacy, and causes of them, are so inexpressibly large, and various, the circumstances of them from providence, natures, conditions, spiritual, and natural, with the particular cases thence arising, so innumerable and impossible to be comprized within my bound or order; that to attempt the giving an account of them, would be to undertake that which would be endless. I shall content myself to give a description of the general nature of that which we are to watch against; which will make way for what I aim at.

Temptation then in general, is any thing, state, way, or condition, that upon any account whatever, hath a force or efficacy to seduce, to draw the mind and heart of a man from its obedience which God requires of him, into any sin, in any degree of it whatever.

In particular, that is a temptation to any man, which causes or occasions him to sin, or in any thing to go off from his duty, either by bringing evil into his heart, or drawing out that evil that is in his heart, or any other way diverting him from communion with God, and that constant, equal, universal obedience, in matter and manner, that is required of him.

For the clearing of this description, I shall only observe, that though temptation seems to be of a more active importance, and so to denote only the power of seduction to sin itself, yet in the Scripture it is commonly taken in a neuter sense, and denotes the matter of the temptation, or the thing whereby we are tempted. And this is a ground of the description I have given of it; be it what it will, that from any thing whatever, within us, or without us, hath advantage to hinder in duty, or to provoke unto, or in any way to occasion sin, that is a temptation, and so to be looked on; be it business, employment, course of life, company, affections, nature, or corrupt design, relations, delights, name, reputation, esteem, abilities, parts or excellencies of body or mind, place, dignity, art, so far as they further, or occasion the promotion of the ends before mentioned, they are all of them no less truly temptations, than the most violent solicitations of Satan, or allurements of the world; and that soul lies at the brink of ruin, who discerns it not; and this will be farther discovered in our process.

CHAP. II.

What it is to enter into temptation. Not barely being tempted. Not to be conquered by it. To fall into it. The force of that expression. Things required unto entering into temptation. Satan or lust more than ordinarily importunate. The soul's entanglement. Seasons of such entanglements discovered. Of the hour of temptation, Rev. iii. 18. *what it is. How any temptation comes to its hour. How it may be known when it is so come. The means of prevention prescribed by our Saviour. Of watching, and what is intended thereby. Of prayer.*

HAVING shewed what temptation is, I come secondly, To manifest what it is to enter into temptation.

1. This is not merely to be tempted: it is impossible that we should be so freed from temptation, as not to be at all tempted. Whilst Satan continues in his power and malice, whilst the world and lust are in being, we shall be tempted: Christ, says one, was made like unto us, that he might be tempted; and we are tempted that we may be made like unto Christ: temptation in general is comprehensive of our whole warfare; as our Saviour calls the time of his ministry, the time of 'his temptation;' Luke xxii. 21. We have no promise that we shall not be tempted at all, nor are to pray for an absolute freedom from temptations, because we have no such promise of being heard therein. The direction we have for our prayers, is, 'Lead us not into temptation;' Matt. vi. 9. it is 'entering into temptation,' that we are to pray against: we may be tempted, yet not enter into temptation. So that,

2. Something more is intended by this expression, than the ordinary work of Satan, and our own lusts, which will be sure to tempt us every day. There is something signal in this entering into temptation, that is not the saints' every day's work: it is something that befalls them peculiarly in reference to seduction unto sin, on one account or other, by the way of allurement or affrightment.

3. It is not to be conquered by a temptation; to fall down under it; to commit the sin or evil that we are tempted to, or to omit the duties that are opposed. A man may [illegible] temptation, and yet not fall under temptation. [illegible]ake a way for a man to escape, when he is in, he

can break the snare, tread down Satan, and make the soul more than a conqueror, though it have entered into temptation: Christ entered into it, but was not in the least foiled by it. But,

4. It is as the apostle expresseth it, 1 Tim. vi. 9. ἐμπίπτειν, 'to fall into temptation;' as a man falls into a pit or deep place, where are gins and snares, wherewith he is entangled, the man is not presently killed and destroyed, but he is entangled and detained, he knows not how to get free, or be at liberty. So it is expressed again to the same purpose, 1 Cor. x. 13. 'no temptation hath taken you:' that is, to be taken by a temptation, and to be tangled with it, held in its cords, not finding at present a way to escape. Thence saith Peter, 2 Eph. ii. 9. 'The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations:' they are entangled with them, God knows how to deliver them out of them. When we suffer a temptation to enter into us, then we enter into temptation: whilst it knocks at the door, we are at liberty; but when any temptation comes in, and parlies with the heart, reasons with the mind, entices and allures the affections, be it long or a short time, do it thus insensibly and imperceptibly, or do the soul take notice of it, we enter into temptation.

So then, unto our entering into temptation is required,

(1.) That by some advantage, or on some occasion, Satan be more earnest than ordinary in his solicitations to sin, by affrightments or allurements, by persecutions or seductions, by himself or others; or that some lust or corruption by his instigation, and advantages of outward objects provoking, as in prosperity, or terrifying, as in trouble, do tumultuate more than ordinary within us. There is a special acting of the author, and principles of temptation, required thereunto.

(2.) That the heart be so far entangled with it, as to be put to dispute, and argue in its own defence, and yet not be wholly able to eject or cast out the poison, and leaven that which hath been injected; but is surprised, if it be never so little off its watch, into an entanglement not easy to be avoided; so that the soul may cry, and pray, and cry again, and yet not be delivered; as Paul sought the Lord thrice

for the departure of his temptation, and prevailed not. The entanglement continues. And this usually falls out in one of these two seasons.

[1.] When Satan by the permission of God, for ends best known to himself, hath got some peculiar advantage against the soul. As in the case of Peter: 'he sought to winnow him,' and prevailed.

[2.] When a man's lusts and corruptions meet with peculiarly provoking objects and occasions, through the condition of life that a man is in, with the circumstances of it; as it was with David: of both which afterward.

In this state of things, a man is entered into temptation; and this is called the 'hour of temptation;' Rev. iii. 10. The season wherein it grows to a head; the discovery whereof will give farther light into the present inquiry, about what it is to enter into temptation; for when the hour of temptation is come upon us, we are entered into it. Every great and pressing temptation hath its hour, a season wherein it grows to a head; wherein it is most vigorous, active, operative, and prevalent. It may be long in rising, it may be long urging more or less; but it hath a season, wherein from the conjunction of other occurrences, such as those mentioned, outward or inward, it hath a dangerous hour, and then for the most part, men enter into it. Hence that very temptation, which at one time hath little or no power on a man, he can despise it, scorn the motions of it, easily resist it; at another, bears him away quite before it: it hath from other circumstances and occurrences, got new strength and efficacy; or the man is enervated and weakened, the hour is come, he is entered into it, and it prevails. David probably had temptations before in his younger days to adultery or murder, as he had in the case of Nabal; but the hour of temptation was not come, it had not got its advantages about it, and so he escaped, until afterward. Let men look for it, that are exposed unto temptations, as who is not? they will have a season wherein their solicitations will be more urgent, their reasonings more plausible, pretences more glorious, hopes of recovery more appearing, opportunities more broad and open, the doors of evil made more beautiful than ever they have been: blessed is he who is prepared for

such a season, without which there is no escaping. This, as I said, is the first thing required to entering into temptation; if we stay here, we are safe.

Before I descend to other particulars, having now entered hereon, I shall shew in general,

1st. How, or by what means, commonly any temptation attains its hour.

2dly. How we may know when any temptation is come to its high noon, and is in its hour.

1st. It doth the first by several ways.

(1st.) By long solicitations, causing the mind frequently to converse with the evil solicited unto, it begets extenuating thoughts of it. If it makes this process, it is coming towards its hour. It may be when first it began to press upon the soul, the soul was amazed with the ugly appearance of what it aimed at, and cried, am I a dog? If this indagation be not daily heightened, but the soul by conversing with the evil, begins to grow as it were familiar with it, not to be startled as formerly, but rather inclines to cry, Is it not a little one; then the temptation is coming towards its high noon, lust hath then enticed and entangled, and is ready to conceive, James ii. 14. of which more at large afterward, in our inquiry, how we may know, whether we are entered into temptation, or no: our present inquest is after the hour and power of temptation itself.

(2dly.) When it hath prevailed on others, and the soul is not filled with dislike and abhorrency of them and their ways, nor with pity and prayer for their deliverance. This proves an advantage unto it, and raises it towards its height. When that temptation sets upon any one, which at the same time hath possessed and prevailed with many, it hath so great, and so many advantages thereby, that it is surely growing towards its hour. Its prevailing with others, is a means to give it its hour against us. The falling off of Hymeneus and Philetus, is said to 'overthrow the faith of some;' 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18.

(3dly.) By complicating itself with many considerations, that perhaps are not absolutely evil. So did the temptation of the Galatians to fall from the purity of the gospel, freedom from persecution, union and consent with the Jews: things in themselves good, were pleaded in it, and gave life

to the temptation itself. But I shall not now insist on the several advantages, that any temptation hath to heighten and greaten itself, to make itself prevalent and effectual, with the contribution that it receives to this purpose, from various circumstances, opportunities, specious pleas and pretences, necessities for the doing that which cannot be done without answering the temptation, and the like; because I must speak unto some of them afterward.

2dly. For the second, it may be known,

(1st.) By its restless urgency, and arguing. When a temptation is in its hour, it is restless: it is the time of battle, and it gives the soul no rest. Satan sees his advantage, considers his conjunction of forces, and knows that he must now prevail, or be hopeless for ever. Here are opportunities, here are advantages, here are specious pleas and pretences; some ground is already got by former arguings, here are extenuations of the evil, hopes of pardon by after endeavours, all in a readiness; if he can do nothing now, he must sit down lost in his undertakings. So when he had got all things in a readiness against Christ, he made it the hour of darkness. When a temptation discovers 'mille nocendi artes,' presses within doors by imaginations and reasonings; without, by solicitations, advantages, and opportunities; let the soul know, that the hour of it is come, and the glory of God, with its own welfare, depends on its behaviour in this trial: as we shall see in the particular cases following.

(2dly.) When it makes a conjunction of affrightments and allurements, these two comprise the whole forces of temptation. When both are brought together, temptation is in its hour. They were both in David's case, as to the murder of Uriah; there was the fear of his revenge on his wife, and possibly on himself; and fear of the publication of his sin, at least; and there was the allurement of his present enjoyment of her, whom he lusted after. Men sometimes are carried into sin by love to it, and are continued in it by fear of what will ensue upon it. But in any case, where these two meet, something allures us, something affrights us, and the reasonings that run between them, are ready to entangle us, then is the hour of temptation.

This then it is to enter into temptation, this is the

hour of it; of which more in the process of our discourse.

(3dly.) There is the means of prevention prescribed by our Saviour, they are two:

[1st.] Watch.

[2dly.] Pray.

[1st.] The first is a general expression, by no means to be limited to its native signification, of waking from sleep: to watch is as much as to be on our guard, to take heed, to consider all ways and means, whereby an enemy may approach to us. So the apostle, 1 Cor. xvi. 13. This it is to watch in this business, to stand fast in the faith, as good soldiers, to quit ourselves like men. It is as much as προσέχειν, to 'take heed,' or look to ourselves, as the same thing is by our Saviour often expressed: so Rev. iii. 2. A universal carefulness, and diligence, exercising itself in, and by all ways and means, prescribed by God, over our hearts and ways, the baits and methods of Satan, the occasions and advantages of sin in the world, that we be not entangled, is that which in this word is pressed on us.

[2dly.] For the second direction of prayer, I need not speak to it. The duty and its concernments are known to all: I shall only add, that these two comprise the whole endeavour of faith, for the soul's preservation from temptation.

CHAP. III.

The doctrine. Grounds of it; our Saviour's direction in this case. His promise of preservation. Issues of man entering into temptation. 1. *Of ungrounded professors.* 2. *Of the choicest saints, Adam, Abraham, David. Self-consideration as to our own weakness. The power of a man's heart to withstand temptation considered. The considerations that it useth for that purpose. The power of temptation; it darkens the mind. The several ways whereby it doth so.* 1. *By fixing the imaginations.* 2. *By entangling the affections.* 3. *Temptations give fuel to lust.* 4. *The end of temptation considered, with the issue of former temptations; some objections answered.*

HAVING thus opened the words in the foregoing chapter so far as is necessary to discover the foundation of the truth to

be insisted on, and improved, I shall lay it down in the ensuing observation.

Observ. It is the great duty of all believers to use all diligence in the ways of Christ's appointment, that they fall not into temptation.

I know God is able to deliver the godly out of temptation. I know he is 'faithful, not to suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will make a way for our escape,' yet I dare say I shall convince all those who will attend unto what is delivered and written, that it is our great duty and concernment to use all diligence, watchfulness, and care, that we enter not into temptation; and I shall evince it by the ensuing considerations.

1. In that compendious instruction given us by our Saviour, concerning what we ought to pray for, this of not 'entering into temptation,' is expressly one head. Our Saviour knew of what concernment it was to us, not to enter into temptation, when he gave us this, as one special subject of our daily dealing with God; Matt. vi. 13. And the order of the words shews us of what importance it is; 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.' If we are led into temptation, evil will befall us, more or less. How God may be said to tempt us, or 'to lead us into temptation' I shewed before. In this direction, it is not so much the not giving us up to it, as the powerful keeping us from it, that is intended. The last words are as it were exegetical, or expository of the former; 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil:' so deal with us, that we may be powerfully delivered from that evil, which attends our entering into temptation. Our blessed Saviour knows full well our state and condition; he knows the power of temptations, having had experience of it; Heb. ii. 12. he knows our vain confidence, and the reserves we have concerning our ability to deal with temptations, as he found it in Peter; but he knows our weakness and folly, and how soon we are cast to the ground; and therefore doth he lay in this provision for instruction, at the entrance of his ministry, to make us heedful, if possible, in that which is of so great concernment to us. If then we will repose any confidence in the wisdom, love, and care of Jesus Christ towards us, we must grant the truth pleaded for.

2. Christ promiseth this freedom and deliverance as a great reward of most acceptable obedience; Rev. iii. 10. This is the great promise made to the church of Philadelphia, wherein Christ found nothing that he would blame. 'Thou shalt be kept from the hour of temptation;' not, thou shalt be preserved in it; but he goes higher, 'thou shalt be kept from it.' There is, saith our Saviour, an hour of temptation coming; a season that will make havoc in the world; multitudes shall then fall from the faith, deny and blaspheme me. Oh how few will be able to stand and hold out! Some will be utterly destroyed and perish for ever; some will get wounds to their souls that shall never be well healed whilst they live in this world, and have their bones broken, so as to go halting all their days. But, saith he, 'because thou hast kept the word of my patience,' I will be tender towards thee, and keep the from this hour of temptation. Certainly that which Christ thus promises to his beloved church, as a reward of her service, love, and obedience, is no light thing; whatever Christ promiseth to his spouse, is a fruit of unspeakable love; that is so in an especial manner, which is promised as a reward of special obedience.

3. Let us to this purpose consider the general issues of men's entering into temptation, and that of bad and good men, of ungrounded professors, and of the choicest saints.

(1.) For the first I shall offer but one or two texts of Scripture; Luke viii. 13. 'They on the rock, are they which when they hear, receive the word with joy, and have no root, but for awhile believe.' Well! how long do they believe? They are affected with the preaching of the word, and believe thereon; make profession, bring forth some fruits; but until when do they abide? Says he, 'In the time of temptation they fall away;' when once they enter into temptation they are gone for ever; temptation withers all their profession, and slays their souls. We see this accomplished every day; men who have attended on the preaching of the gospel, been affected and delighted with it, that have made profession of it, and have been looked on, it may be, as believers, and thus have continued for some years; no sooner doth a temptation befall them, that hath vigour and perma-

nency in it, but they are turned out of the way, and are gone for ever; they fall to hate the word they have delighted in, despise the professors of it, and are hardened by sin. So Matt. vii. 26. 'He that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, is like a man that built his house upon the sand;' but what doth this house of profession do? It shelters him, keeps him warm, and stands for awhile; but saith he, ver. 27. when the rain descends, when temptation comes, it falls utterly, and its fall is great. Judas follows our Saviour three years, and all goes well with him; he no sooner enters into temptation, Satan hath got him, and winnowed him, but he is gone. Demas will preach the gospel, until the love of the world befall him, and he is utterly turned aside. It were endless to give instances of this; entrance into temptation, is with this sort of men an entrance into apostacy, more or less, in part or in whole, it faileth not.

(2.) For the saints of God themselves, let us see by some instances, what issue they have had of their entering into temptation. I shall name a few.

Adam, was the son of God; Luke iii. created in the image of God; full of that integrity, righteousness, and holiness, which might be and was an eminent resemblance of the holiness of God. He had a far greater inherent stock of ability than we; and had nothing in him to entice or seduce him, yet this Adam no sooner enters into temptation, but he is gone, lost, and ruined, he and all his posterity with him. What can we expect in the like condition, that have not only in our temptations, as he had, a cunning devil to deal withal, but a cursed world, and a corrupt heart also?

Abraham was the father of the faithful; Gen. xii. 12, 13. whose faith is proposed as a pattern to all them that shall believe; Gen. xx. 2. yet he entering twice into the same temptation, namely, that of fear about his wife, was twice overpowered by it, to the dishonour of God, and no doubt the disquietment of his own soul.

David is called a man after God's own heart by God himself; yet what a dreadful thing is the story of his entering into temptation; he is no sooner entangled, but he is plunged into adultery; thence seeking deliverance by his

own invention, like a poor creature in a toil, he is entangled more and more, until he lies as one dead, under the power of sin and folly.

I might mention Noah, Lot, Hezekiah, Peter, and the rest, whose temptations and falls therein, are on record for our instruction. Certainly he that hath any heart in these things, cannot but say as the inhabitants of Samaria upon the letter of Jehu; 'Behold two kings stood not before him, how shall we stand?' Oh Lord! if such mighty pillars have been cast to the ground, such cedars blown down, how shall I stand before temptations? Oh keep me that I enter not in, 'vestigia terrent;' behold the footsteps of them that have gone in; whom do you see retiring without a wound? a blemish at least? On this account would the apostle have us to exercise tenderness towards them that are fallen into sin; Gal. vi. 1. 'Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted;' he doth not say, lest thou also sin, or fall, or be overtaken with a fault; but lest thou also be tempted; thou seest the power of temptation in others, and knowest not how soon thou mayest be tempted, nor what will be the state and condition of thy soul thereupon. Assuredly he that hath seen so many better, stronger men than himself fail, and cast down in the trial, will think it incumbent on him to remember the battle, and if it be possible, to come there no more. Is it not a madness for a man that can scarce crawl up and down, he is so weak (which is the case of most of us) if he avoid not what he hath seen giants foiled in the undertaking of? Thou art yet whole and sound, take heed of temptation, lest it be with thee as it was with Abraham, David, Lot, Peter, Hezekiah, the Galatians, who fell in the time of trial.

In nothing doth the folly of the hearts of men shew itself more openly, in the days wherein we live, than in this cursed boldness, after so many warnings from God, and so many sad experiences every day under their eyes, of running into and putting themselves upon temptations. Any society, any company, any conditions of outward advantages, without once weighing what their strength, or what the concernment of their poor souls is, they are ready for. Though they go over the dead and the slain, that in those ways and paths but even now fell down before them, yet they will go on without regard or trembling. At this door are gone out

hearts deceive them no oftener than they do trust in them, and then they never fail so to do.

[2.] Consider the particular ways and means, that such a heart hath, or can use to safeguard itself in the hour of temptation, and their insufficiency to that purpose will quickly appear. I shall instance in some few only.

1st. Love of honour in the world. Reputation and esteem in the church, obtained by former profession, and walking, is one of the heart's own weapons to defend itself in the hour of temptation. Shall such a one as I fly? I who have had such a reputation in the church of God, shall I now lose it by giving way to this lust, to this temptation? by closing with this, or that public evil? This consideration hath such an influence on the spirits of some, that they think it will be a shield and buckler against any assaults that may befall them. They will die a thousand times before they will forfeit that repute, they have in the church of God. But alas, this is but a with, or a new cord, to bind a giant temptation withal. What think you of the third part of the stars of heaven? Rev. xii. 4. Had they not shone in the firmament of the church? Were they not sensible, more than enough, of their own honour, height, usefulness, and reputation? But when the dragon comes with his temptations, he casts them down to the earth. Yea, great temptations will make men, who have not a better defence, insensibly fortify themselves against that dishonour, and disreputation that their ways are attended withal: 'populus sibilet, nec mihi plaudo;' do we not know instances yet living, of some who have ventured on compliances with wicked men, after the glory of a long and useful profession, and within a while finding themselves cast down thereby from their reputation with the saints, have hardened themselves against it, and ended in apostacy? as John xv. 6. This kept not Judas, it kept not Hymeneus nor Philetus, it kept not the stars of heaven, nor will it keep thee,

2dly. There is on the other side, the consideration of shame, reproach, loss, and the like. This also men may put their trust in, as a defence against temptations; and do not but to be safeguarded and preserved by it. They would or the world bring that shame and reproach upon them- that such and such miscarriages are attended withal.

Now, besides that this consideration extends itself only to open sins, such as the world takes notice of, and abhors, and so is of no use at all in such cases, as wherein pretences and colours may be invented and used, nor in public temptations to loose and careless walking, like those of our days, nor in cases that may be disputable in themselves, though expressly sinful to the consciences of persons under temptations, nor in heart sins, in all which, and most other cases of temptation, there are innumerable reliefs ready to be tendered unto the heart against this consideration; besides all this, I say, we see by experience, how easily this cord is broken, when once the heart begins to be entangled: each corner of the land is full of examples to this purpose.

3dly. They have yet that which outweighs these lesser considerations; namely, that they will not wound their own consciences, and disturb their peace, and bring themselves in danger of hell fire. This surely, if any thing, will preserve men in the hour of temptation. They will not lavish away their peace, nor venture their souls, by running on God, and the thick bosses of his buckler. What can be of more efficacy and prevalency? I confess this is of great importance; and Oh that it were more pondered than it is: that we laid more weight upon the preservation of our peace with God, than we do; yet I say that even this consideration in him who is otherwhere off from his watch, and doth not make it his work to follow the other rules insisted on; it will not preserve him: for

(1st.) The peace of such a one, may be false peace or security; made up of presumption and false hopes, yea, though he be a believer, it may be so: such was David's peace after his sin, before Nathan came to him: such was Laodicea's peace, when ready to perish; and Sardis, her peace, when dying. What should secure a soul that it is otherwise; seeing it is supposed, that it doth not universally labour to keep the word of Christ's patience, and to be watchful in all things? Think you that the peace of many in these days, will be found to be true peace at last? Nothing less; they go alive down to hell, and death will have dominion over them in the morning. Now if a man's peace be such, do you think that can preserve him, which cannot preserve itself? It will give way at the first vigorous assault of a temptation in its height and hour. Like a

whereof the mind was wont to have a vigorous sense to keep it from sin, will by this means come to have no force or efficacy with it; nay, it will commonly bring men to that state and condition, that when others to whom their estate is known, are speaking to them the things that concern their deliverance and peace, their minds will be so possessed with the matter of their temptation, as not at all to understand, scarce to hear one word that is spoken to them.

2dly. By woful entangling of the affections, which when they are engaged, what influence they have in blinding the mind, and darkening the understanding, is known: if any know it not, let him but open his eyes, in these days, and he will quickly learn it. By what ways and means it is, that engaged affections will becloud the mind and darken it, I shall not now declare. Only I say, give me a man engaged in hope, love, fear, in reference to any particulars wherein he ought not, and I shall quickly shew you, wherein he is darkened and blinded. This then you will fail in, if you enter into temptation: the present judgment you have of things, will not be utterly altered, but darkened, and rendered infirm, to influence the will and master the affections; these being set at liberty by temptation will run on in madness. Forthwith detestation of sin, abhorring of it, terrors of the Lord, sense of love, presence of Christ crucified, all depart and leave the heart a prey to its enemy.

3dly. Temptation will give oil and fuel to our lusts, incite, provoke, and make them tumultuate and rage beyond measure; tendering a lust, a corruption, a suitable object, advantage, occasion, it heightens and exasperates it, makes it for a season wholly predominant; so dealt it with carnal fear in Peter, with pride in Hezekiah, with covetousness in Achan, with uncleanness in David, with worldliness in Demas, with ambition in Diotrephes; it will lay the reins on the neck of a lust, and put spurs to the sides of it, that it may rush forward, like a horse into the battle. A man knows not the pride, fury, madness of a corruption, until it meet with a suitable temptation. And what now will a poor soul think to do? His mind is darkened, his affections entangled, his lusts inflamed and provoked, his relief is defeated, and what will be the issue of such a condition?

(3.) Consider that temptations are either public or pri-

vate; and let us a little view the efficacy and power of them apart.

[1.] There are public temptations; such as that mentioned, Rev. iii. 10. that was to come upon the world to try them that dwell upon the earth; or a combination of persecution and seduction for the trial of a careless generation of professors: now concerning such a temptation, consider that,

1st. It hath an efficacy in respect of God, who sends it to revenge the neglect and contempt of the gospel on the one hand; and treachery of false professors on the other. Hence it will certainly accomplish what it receives commission from him to do. When Satan offered his service to go forth and seduce Ahab, that he might fall; God says to him, 'Thou shalt persuade him and prevail also: go forth and do so;' 1 Kings xxii. 22. he is permitted as to his wickedness, and commissionated, as to the event and punishment intended. When the Christian world was to be given up to folly and false worship, for their neglect of the truth, and their naked, barren, fruitless, Christ-dishonouring profession; it is said of the temptation that fell upon them, that God 'sent them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie;' 2 Thess. ii. 11. That, that comes so from God in a judiciary manner, hath a power with it, and shall prevail; that selfish, spiritually slothful, careless, and worldly frame of spirit, which in these days hath infected almost the body of professors, if it have a commission from God, to kill hypocrites, to wound negligent saints, to break their bones, and make them scandalous, that they may be ashamed, shall it not have a power and efficacy so to do? What work hath the spirit of error made amongst us? Is it not from hence, that as some men delighted not to retain God in their hearts, so he hath 'given them up to a reprobate mind;' Rom. i. 28. A man would think it strange, yea, it is matter of amazement, to see persons of a sober spirit, pretending to great things in the ways of God, overcome, captivated, ensnared, destroyed, by weak means, sottish opinions, foolish imaginations, such as a man would think it impossible that they should ever lay hold on sensible or rational men, much less on professors of the gospel. But that which God will have to be strong, let us not think weak; no strength but the strength of God, can stand

What were those before us, that we are not? What did they, we do not? Prosperity hath slain the foolish, and wounded the wise.

[2.] Suppose the temptation is private; this hath been spoken to before; I shall add two things:

1st. Its union and incorporation with lust, whereby it gets within the soul, and lies at the bottom of its actings. John tells us, 1 Epist. ii. 16. that the things that are in the world, 'are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life.' Now it is evident that all these things are principally in the subject, not in the object; in the heart, not in the world. But they are said to be in the world, because the world gets into them; mixes itself with them, unites, incorporates. As faith and the promises are said to be mixed, Heb. iv. 2. so are lust and temptation mixed; they twine together, receive mutual improvement from one another; grow each of them higher and higher by the mutual strength they administer to one another. Now by this means temptation gets so deep in the heart, that no contrary reasonings can reach unto it; nothing but what can kill the lust, can conquer the temptation. Like leprosy that hath mingled itself with the wall; the wall itself must be pulled down, or the leprosy will not be cured. Like a gangrene that mixes poison with the blood and spirits, and cannot be separated from the place where it is, but both must be cut off together. For instance, in David's temptation to uncleanness: ten thousand considerations might have been taken in, to stop the mouth of the temptation; but it had united itself with his lust, and nothing but the killing of that, could destroy it, or get him the conquest. This deceives many a one: they have some pressing temptation, that having got some advantages is urgent upon them; they pray against it, oppose it with all powerful considerations: such, as whereof every one seems sufficient to conquer and destroy it; at least to overpower it, that it should never be troublesome any more; but no good is done, no ground is got or obtained, yea, it grows upon them more and more: what is the reason of it? It hath incorporated and united itself with the lust, and is safe from all the opposition they make. If they would make work indeed, they are to set upon the whole of the lust itself; their ambition, pride, worldliness, sensuality,

or whatever it be, that the temptation is united with. All other dealings with it are like tamperings with a prevailing gangrene; the part or whole may be preserved a little while, in great torment; excision or death must come at last. The soul may cruciate itself for a season, with such a procedure; but it must come to this, its lust must die, or the soul must die.

2dly. In what part soever of the soul the lust be seated, wherewith the temptation is united, it draws after it the whole soul, by one means or other, and so prevents or anticipates any opposition. Suppose it be a lust of the mind; as there are lusts of the mind, and uncleanness of the spirit; such as ambition, vain-glory, and the like; what a world of ways hath the understanding to bridle the affections, that they should not so tenaciously cleave to God, seeing in what it aimeth at, there is so much to give them contentment and satisfaction. It will not only prevent all the reasonings of the mind, which it doth necessarily, being like a bloody infirmity in the eyes, presenting all things to the common sense and perception in that hue and colour; but it will draw the whole soul on other accounts, and collateral considerations, into the same frame. It promises the whole share in the spoil aimed at; as Judas's money, that he first desired from covetousness, was to be shared among all his lusts. Or be it in the more sensual part, and first possesseth the affections; what prejudices they will bring upon the understanding, how they will bribe it to an acquiescence; what arguments, what hopes they will supply it withal cannot easily be expressed; as was before shewed. In brief, there is no particular temptation, but, when it is in its hour, it hath such a contribution of assistance from things good, evil, indifferent, is fed by so many considerations, that seem to be most alien and foreign to it, in some cases hath such specious pleas and pretences, that its strength will easily be acknowledged.

(5.) Consider the end of any temptation; this is Satan's end, and sin's end; that is, the dishonour of God, and the ruin of our souls.

(6.) Consider what hath been the issue of any former temptations that thou hast had; have they not defiled thy

conscience, disquieted thy peace, weakened thee in thy obedience, clouded the face of God? though thou wast not prevailed on to the outward evil or utmost issue of thy temptation; yet hast thou not been foiled; hath not thy soul been sullied and grievously perplexed with it? yea, didst thou ever in thy life come fairly off without sensible loss from any temptation almost that thou hadst to deal withal; and wouldst thou willingly be entangled again? If thou art at liberty take heed, enter no more if it be possible, lest a worse thing happen to thee.

These, I say, are some of those many considerations, that might be insisted on, to manifest the importance of the truth proposed, and the fulness of our concernment, in taking care that we enter not into temptation.

Against what hath been spoken, some objections that secretly insinuate themselves into the souls of men, and have an efficacy to make them negligent and careless, in this thing which is of such importance to them; a duty of such indispensable necessity to them who intend to walk with God in any peace, or with any faithfulness; are to be considered and removed. And they are these that follow:

Ob. 1. Why should we so fear and labour to avoid temptation? James i. 2. we are commanded to count it all 'joy when we fall into divers temptations;' now certainly I need not solicitously avoid the falling into that, which, when I am fallen into, I am to count it all joy. To which I answer,

1. You will not hold by this rule in all things; namely, that a man need not seek to avoid that, which when he cannot but fall into, it is his duty to rejoice therein. The same apostle bids the rich 'rejoice that they are made low;' chap. i. 10. And without doubt to him who is acquainted with the goodness and wisdom, and love of God in his dispensations in every condition that is needful for him, it will be a matter of rejoicing to him; but yet how few rich godly men can you persuade not to take heed, and use all lawful means that they be not made poor and low; and in most cases, the truth is it were their sin, not to do so. It is our business to make good our stations, and to secure ourselves as we can; if God alter our condition, we are to rejoice

in it: if the temptations here mentioned befall us, we may have cause to rejoice; but not if by a neglect of duty we fall into them.

2. Temptations are taken two ways:

(1.) Passively and merely materially, for such things, as are, or in some cases, may be temptations. Or,

(2.) Actively for such as do entice to sin. James speaks of temptations in the first sense only; for having said, 'Count it all joy when you enter into manifold temptations;' ver. 2. he adds, ver. 12. 'Blessed is the man that endureth temptation;' for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life. But now whereas a man might say, if this be so, then temptations are good, and from God; no, says James, take temptation in such a sense, as that it is a thing enticing and leading to sin; so God tempts none; but every man is tempted of his own lust; ver. 13, 14. To have such temptations, to be tempted to sin, that is not the blessed thing I intend; but the enduring of afflictions that God sends for the trial of our faith; that is a blessed thing: so that though I must count it all joy, when through the will of God I fall into divers afflictions, for my trial, which yet have the matter of temptation in them, yet I am to use all care and diligence, that my lust have no occasions or advantages given unto it, to tempt me to sin.

Ob. 2. But was not our Saviour Christ himself tempted: and is it evil to be brought into the same state and condition with him? Yea, it is not only said, that he was tempted: but his being so, is expressed as a thing advantageous, and conducing to his mercifulness as our priest, Heb. ii. 17, 18. 'In that himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.' And he makes it a ground of a great promise to his disciples, that they had abode with him in his temptations; Luke xxii. 28.

Ans. It is true, our Saviour was tempted; but yet his temptations are reckoned among the evils that befell him in the days of his flesh; things that come on him through the malice of the world, and the prince thereof. He did not wilfully cast himself into temptation, which he said was 'to tempt the Lord our God;' Matt. iv. 7. as indeed willingly to enter into any temptation is highly to tempt God. Now our condition is so, that use the greatest diligence and watch-

fulness that we can, yet we shall be sure to be tempted, and be made like to Christ therein. This hinders not, but that it is our duty to the utmost to prevent our falling into them; and that namely on this account. Christ had only the suffering part of temptation, when he entered into it; we have also the sinning part of it. When the prince of this world came to Christ he 'had no part in him,' but when he comes to us, he hath so in us; so that though in one effect of temptations, namely, trials and disquietness; we are made like to Christ and so are to rejoice, as far as by any means that is produced; yet by another, we are made unlike to him, which is our being defiled and entangled, and are therefore to seek by all means to avoid them, we never come off like Christ: who of us enter into temptation and are not defiled?

Ob. 3. But what need this great endeavour and carefulness? Is it not said that 'God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape?' 1 Cor. x. 13. and 'he knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation;' 2 Pet. ii. 9. What need we then be solicitous that we enter not into them?

Ans. I much question what assistance he will have from God in his temptation, who willingly enters into it, because he supposes God hath promised to deliver him out of it. The Lord knows, that through the craft of Satan, the subtlety and malice of the world, the deceitfulness of sin that doth so easily beset us, when we have done our utmost, yet we shall enter into divers temptations; in his love, care, tenderness, and faithfulness, he hath provided such a sufficiency of grace for us, that they shall not utterly prevail to make an everlasting separation between him and our souls; yet I have three things to say to this objection:

(1.) He that wilfully or negligently enters into temptation, hath no reason in the world to promise himself any assistance from God, or any deliverance from the temptation whereunto he is entered. The promise is made to them whom temptations do befall in their way, whether they will, or not; not them that wilfully fall into them, that run out of their way to meet with them. And therefore the devil (as is usually observed) when he tempted our Saviour, left out

that expression of the text of Scripture, which he wrested to his purpose, 'all thy ways:' the promise of deliverance is to them who are in their ways; whereof this is one principal, to beware of temptation.

(2.) Though there be a sufficiency of grace provided for all the elect, that they shall by no temptation fall utterly from God; yet it would make any gracious heart to tremble, to think what dishonour to God, what scandal to the gospel, what woful darkness and disquietness they may bring upon their own souls, though they perish not. And they who are scared by nothing but fear of hell, on whom other considerations short thereof have no influence, in my apprehension, have more reason to fear it, than perhaps they are aware of.

(3.) To enter on temptation on this account, is to venture on sin (which is the same with continuing in sin), that grace may abound, Rom. vi. 1, 2. which the apostle rejects the thoughts of with greatest detestation; is it not a madness for a man willingly to suffer the ship wherein he is, to split itself on a rock, to the irrecoverable loss of his merchandise, because he supposes he shall in his own person swim safely to shore on a plank? Is it less in him, who will hazard the shipwreck of all his comfort, peace, joy, and so much of the glory of God, and honour of the gospel as he is intrusted with, merely on supposition that his soul shall yet escape? These things a man would think did not deserve to be mentioned; and yet with such as these do poor souls sometimes delude themselves.

CHAP. IV.

Particular cases proposed to consideration: the first its restitution in sundry particulars; several discoveries of the state of a soul entering into temptation.

THESE things being premised in general, I proceed to the consideration of three particular cases arising from the truth proposed, the first whereof relates unto the thing itself; the second unto the time or season thereof; and the last unto our deportment in reference unto the prevention of the evil treated of.

1. Then it may be inquired, How a man may know, when he is entered into temptation?

2. What seasons there are wherein a man may, and ought to fear, that an hour of temptation is at hand.

3. What directions are to be given, for the preventing of our entering into temptation.

1. How shall a man know whether he be entered into temptation or no, is our first inquiry: I say then,

(1.) When a man is drawn into any sin, he may be sure that he hath entered into temptation. All sin is from temptation; James i. 14. Sin is a fruit, that comes only from that root. Though a man be never so suddenly, or violently surprised in, or with any sin, yet it is from some temptation or other, that he hath been so surprised: so the apostle, Gal. vi. 1. If a man be surprised, overtaken with a fault, yet he was tempted to it: for, says he, 'Consider thyself lest thou also be tempted,' that is, as he was, when he was so surprised, as it were at unawares. This men sometimes take no notice of, to their great disadvantage; when they are overtaken with a sin, they set themselves to repent of that sin, but do not consider the temptation that was the cause of it, to set themselves against that also; to take care that they enter no more into it; hence are they quickly again entangled by it; though they have the greatest detestation of the sin itself, that can be expressed. He that would indeed get the conquest over any sin, must consider his temptations to it, and strike at that root; without deliverance from thence, he will not be healed.

This is a folly that possesses many, who have yet a quick and living sense of sin: they are sensible of their sins, not of their temptations; are displeased with the bitter fruit, but cherish the poisonous root: hence in the midst of their humiliations for sin, they will continue in those ways, those societies, in the pursuit of those ends, which have occasioned that sin; of which more afterward.

(2.) Temptations have several degrees; some arise to such an height, do so press on the soul, so cruciate and disquiet it, so fight against all opposition that is made to it; that it must needs be past all doubt to him who is so assaulted, that it is a peculiar power of temptation that he is to wrestle withal. When a fever rages, a man knows he is sick, un-

less his distemper have made him mad. The lusts of men, as James tells us, entice, draw away, and seduce them to sin; but this they do of themselves without peculiar instigation, in a more quiet, even, and sedate manner; if they grow violent, if they hurry the soul up and down, give it no rest, the soul may know that they have got the help of temptation to their assistance. Take an empty vessel, and put it into some stream that is in its course to the sea; it will infallibly be carried thither, according to the course and speed of the stream; but let strong winds arise upon it, it will be driven with violence on every bank and rock, until being broken in pieces, it is swallowed up of the ocean. Men's lusts will infallibly (if not mortified in the death of Christ) carry them into eternal ruin; but oftentimes without much noise, according to the course of the stream of their corruptions. But let the wind of strong temptations befall them, they are hurried into innumerable scandalous sins, and so broken upon all accounts, are swallowed up in eternity; so is it in general with men; so in particular. Hezekiah had the root of pride in him always, yet it did not make him run up and down to shew his treasure and his riches, until he fell into temptation, by the ambassadors of the king of Babylon; so had David; yet could he keep off from numbering the people, until Satan stood up and provoked him, and solicited him to do it. Judas was covetous from the beginning, yet he did not contrive to satisfy it by selling of his Master, until the devil entered into him, and he thereby into temptation. The like may be said of Abraham, Jonah, Peter, and the rest. So that when any lust or corruption whatever tumultuates and disquieteth the soul, puts it with violence on sin; let the soul know that it hath got the advantage of some outward temptation, though as yet it perceiveth not wherein, or at least is become itself a peculiar temptation, by some incitation or provocation, that hath befallen it and is to be looked to more than ordinarily.

(3.) Entering into temptation may be seen in the lesser degrees of it. As for instance, when the heart begins secretly to like the matter of the temptation, and is content to feed it, and increase it by any ways that it may, without downright sin.

In particular, a man begins to be in repute for piety,

wisdom, learning, or the like: he is spoken of much to that purpose; his heart is tickled to hear of it, and his pride and ambition affected with it. If this man, now with all his strength, ply the things from whence his repute and esteem and glory amongst men do spring, with a secret eye to have it increased, he is entering into temptation, which if he take not heed, will quickly render him a slave of lust. So was it with Jehu, he perceived that his repute for zeal began to grow abroad, and he got honour by it; Jonadab comes in his way, a good and holy man; now, thinks Jehu, I have an opportunity to grow in the honour of my zeal: so he calls Jonadab to him, and to work he goes most seriously: the things he did were good in themselves, but he was entered into temptation, and served his lust in all that he did. So is it with many scholars, they find themselves esteemed and favoured for their learning, this takes hold of the pride and ambition of their hearts; hence they set themselves to study with all diligence day and night, a thing good in itself; but they do it, that they may satisfy the thoughts and words of men wherein they delight; and so in all they do, they make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.

It is true, God oftentimes brings light out of this darkness, and turns things to a better issue. After it may be a man hath studied sundry years, with an eye upon his lusts; his ambition, pride, and vain-glory; rising early, and going to bed late, to give them satisfaction; God comes in with his grace; turns the soul to himself; robs those Egyptian lusts, and so consecrates that to the use of the tabernacle, which was provided for idols.

Men may be thus entangled in better things than learning, even in the profession of piety, in their labour in the ministry, and the like. Some men's profession is a snare to them; they are in reputation, and are much honoured on the account of their profession and strict walking. This often falls out in the days wherein we live, wherein all things are carried by parties; some find themselves on the accounts mentioned
to be the darlings, and 'ingentia decora,' or glory
arty; if thoughts hereof secretly insinuate them-
their hearts, and influence them into more than
nce and activity in their way and profession,
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had need lie in the dust, in a sense of their own vileness; and so close is this temptation, that oftentimes it requires no food to feed upon, but that he who is entangled with it, do avoid all means and ways of honour and reputation; so that it can but whisper in the heart, that, that avoidance is honourable. The same may be the condition with men, as was said, in preaching the gospel, in the work of the ministry; many things in that work may yield them esteem, their ability, their plainness, their frequency, their success; and all in this sense may be fuel unto temptations. Let then a man know, that when he likes that which feeds his lust, and keeps it up by ways either good in themselves, or not downright sinful, he is entered into temptation.

4. When by a man's state or condition of life, or any means whatever, it comes to pass, that his lust and any temptation meet with occasions and opportunities for its provocation and stirring up; let that man know, whether he perceive it or not, that he is certainly entered into temptation. I told you before, that to enter into temptation, is not merely to be tempted, but so to be under the power of it, as to be entangled by it. Now it is impossible almost, for a man to have opportunities, occasions, advantages suited to his lust and corruption, but he will be entangled. If ambassadors come from the king of Babylon, Hezekiah's pride will cast him into temptation. If Hazael be king of Syria, his cruelty and ambition will make him to rage savagely against Israel; if the priests come with their pieces of silver, Judas's covetousness will instantly be at work to sell his Master; and many instances of the like kind may in the days wherein we live be given. Some men think to play on the hole of the asp, and not be stung, to touch pitch, and not be defiled; to take fire in their clothes, and not be burnt: but they will be mistaken. If thy business, course of life, societies, or whatever else it be of the like kind, do cast thee on such things, ways, persons, as suit thy lust or corruption; know that thou art entered into temptation; how thou wilt come out, God only knows. Let us suppose a man that hath any seeds of filthiness in his heart, engaged in the course of his life, in society light, vain, and foolish; what notice soever, little, great, or none at all, it be, that he takes of it; he is undoubtedly entered into temptation; so is it with am-

bition in high places; passion in a multitude of perplexing affairs: polluted, corrupt fancy in vain societies; and the perusal of idle books, or treatises of vanity and folly; fire and things combustible, may more easily be induced to lie together without affecting each other, than peculiar lusts and suitable objects or occasions for their exercise.

5. When a man is weakened, made negligent, or formal in duty, when he can omit duties, or content himself with a careless, lifeless performance of them, without delight, joy, or satisfaction to his soul, who had another frame formerly: let him know, that though he may not be acquainted with the particular distemper, wherein it consists; yet in something or other, he is entered into temptation, which at the length he will find evident to his trouble and peril. How many have we seen and known in our days, who from a warm profession, have fallen to be negligent, careless, indifferent in praying, reading, hearing, and the like? Give an instance of one who hath come off without a wound, and I dare say you may find out a hundred for him that have manifested themselves to have been asleep on the top of the mast; that they were in the jaws of some vile temptation or other, that afterward brought forth bitter fruit in their lives and ways: from some few returners from folly, we have every day these doleful complaints made. 'Oh, I neglected private prayer, I did not meditate on the word, nor attend to hearing; but rather despised these things, and yet said, I was rich, and wanted nothing; little did I consider, that this unclean lust was ripening in my heart, this atheism, these abominations were fomenting there.' This is a certain rule if his heart grow cold, negligent, or formal in duties of the worship of God, and that either as to the matter, or manner of them, who hath had another frame, one temptation or other, hath laid hold upon him. World, or pride, or uncleanness, or self-seeking, or malice and envy, or one thing or other, hath possessed his spirit; grey hairs are here and there upon him, though he perceive it not. And this is to be observed as to the manner of duties, as well as to the matter. Men may upon many sinister accounts, especially for the satisfaction of their consciences, keep up and frequent duties of religion, as to the substance and matter of them, when they have no heart to them, no life in them as to the spirituality required

in their performance. Sardis kept up the performance of duties, and had therefore a name to live; but wanted spiritual life in their performances, and was therefore dead; Rev. iii. 1. As it is in distempers of the body; if a man finds his spirits faint, his heart oppressed, his head heavy, the whole person indisposed, though he do not yet actually burn, nor rave; yet he will cry, I fear I am entering into a fever, I am so out of order and indisposed. A man may do so in this sickness of the soul, if he find his pulse not beat aright and evenly towards duties of worship, and communion with God, if his spirit be low, and his heart faint in them, let him conclude, though his lust do not yet burn nor rage, that he is entered into temptation, and it is high time for him to consider the particular causes of his distemper. If the head be heavy, and slumber in the things of grace, if the heart be cold in duties, evil lies at the door. And if such a soul do escape a great temptation unto sin, yet it shall not escape a great temptation by desertion. The spouse cries, 'I sleep,' Cant. v. 2, and that she 'had put off her coat, and could not put it on;' had an indisposition to duties and communion with Christ. What is the next news you have of her? verse 6. her beloved had withdrawn himself; Christ was gone, and she seeks him long and finds him not. There is such a suitableness between the new nature that is wrought and created in believers, and the duties of the worship of God, that they will not be parted nor kept asunder, unless it be by the interposition of some disturbing distemper. The new creature feeds upon them, is strengthened and increased by them, finds sweetness in them, yea, meets in them with its God and Father; so that it cannot but of itself, unless made sick by some temptation, but delight in them, and desire to be in the exercise of them; this frame is described in the 119th Psalm throughout. It is not I say cast out of this frame and temper, unless it be oppressed, and disordered, by one secret temptation, or other. Sundry other evidences there are of a soul's entering into temptation, which upon inquiry it may discover.

I propose this to take off the security that we are apt to fall into: and to manifest what is the peculiar duty that we are to apply ourselves unto in the special seasons of temptation. For he that is already entered into temptation is to

apply himself unto means for disentanglement, not to labour to prevent his entering in. How this may be done I shall afterward declare.

CHAP. V.

The second case proposed, or inquiries resolved. What are the best directions, to prevent entering into temptation; those directions laid down. The directions given by our Saviour; 'Watch and pray.' What is included therein. 1. Sense of the danger of temptation. 2. That it is not in our power to keep ourselves. 3. Faith in promises of preservation. Of prayer in particular. Of watching.

HAVING seen the danger of entering into temptation, and also discovered the ways and seasons whereby and wherein men usually do so; our second inquiry is, What general directions may be given to preserve a soul from that condition that hath been spoken of? And we see our Saviour's direction in the place spoken of before, Matt. xxvi. 41. he sums up all in these two words 'watch and pray;' I shall a little labour to unfold them, and shew what is enwrapped and contained in them: and that both jointly and severally.

1. There is included in them, a clear abiding apprehension of the great evil, that there is in entering into temptation. That which a man watches and prays against, he looks upon as evil to him, and by all means to be avoided.

This then is the first direction. Always bear in mind the great danger that it is for any soul to enter into temptation.

It is a woful thing to consider what slight thoughts the most have of this thing: so men can keep themselves from sin itself, in open action, they are content, they scarce aim at more; on any temptation in the world, all sorts of men will venture at any time. How will young men put themselves on any company, any society; at first being delighted with evil company, then with the evil of the company? How vain are all admonitions and exhortations to them, to take heed of such persons, debauched in themselves, corrupters of others, destroyers of souls? At first they will venture on the company, abhorring the thoughts of practising their

lewdness: but what is the issue? Unless it be here or there one, whom God snatches with a mighty hand from the jaws of destruction, they are all lost, and become after awhile in love with the evil, which at first they abhorred. This open door to the ruin of souls, is too evident; and woful experience makes it no less evident, that it is almost impossible to fasten upon many poor creatures, any fear or dread of temptation, who yet will profess a fear and abhorrency of sin. Would it were only thus with young men, such as are unaccustomed to the yoke of the Lord. What sort of men is free from this folly in one thing or other? How many professors have I known that would plead for their liberty, as they called it? They could hear any thing, all things; all sorts of men, all men; they would try all things, whether they come to them in the way of God or no; and on that account would run to hear and to attend to every broacher of false and abominable opinions; every seducer, though stigmatized by the generality of the saints, for such a one they had their liberty, they could do it; but the opinions they hated as much as any; what hath been the issue? I scarce ever knew any come off without a wound; the most have had their faith overthrown: let no man then pretend to fear sin, that doth not fear temptation to it. They are too nearly allied, to be separated. Satan hath put them so together, that it is very hard, for any man to put them asunder: he hates not the fruit, who delights in the root.

When men see that such ways, such companies, such courses, such businesses, such studies and aims do entangle them, make them cold, careless, are quench-coals to them, indispose them to even, universal, and constant obedience, if they adventure on them, sin lies at the door. It is a tender frame of spirit, sensible of its own weakness and corruption, of the craft of Satan, of the evil of sin, of the efficacy of temptation, that can perform his duty. And yet until we bring our hearts to this frame, upon the considerations before-mentioned, or the like that may be proposed, we shall never free ourselves from sinful entanglements. Boldness upon temptation, springing from several pretences hath, as is known, ruined innumerable professors in these days; and still continues to cast many down from their excellency; nor have I the least hope of a more fruitful profession amongst

us, until I see more fear of temptation. Sin will not long seem great or heavy unto any, to whom temptations seem light or small.

This is the first thing enwrapped in this general direction. The daily exercise of our thoughts with an apprehension of the great danger that lies in entering into temptation, is required of us. Grief of the Spirit of God, disquietment of our own souls, loss of peace, hazard of eternal welfare, lies at the door; if the soul be not prevailed withal, to the observation of this direction, all that ensues, will be of no value; temptation despised will conquer: and if the heart be made tender and watchful here, half the work of securing a good conversation is over. And let not him go any farther, who resolves not to improve this direction in a daily conscientious observation of it.

2. There is this in it also, that it is not a thing in our own power, to keep and preserve ourselves from entering into temptation. Therefore are we to pray that we may be preserved from it, because we cannot save ourselves.

This is another means of preservation; as we have no strength to resist a temptation when it doth come, when we are entered into it, but shall fall under it, without a supply of sufficiency of grace from God, so to reckon that we have no power or wisdom to keep ourselves from entering into temptation, but must be kept by the power and wisdom of God, is a preserving principle; 1 Peter i. 5. We are in all things kept by the power of God. This our Saviour instructs us in, not only by directing us to pray that we be not led into temptation; but also by his own praying for us, that we may be kept from it; John xvii. 15. 'I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil:' that is, the temptations of the world, unto evil, unto sin; ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ, 'out of the evil' that is in the world, that is temptation, which is all that is evil in the world; or from the evil one, who in the world, makes use of the world, unto temptation. Christ prays his Father to keep us; and instructs us to pray that we be so kept; it is not then a thing in our own power. The ways of our entering into temptation are so many, various, and imperceptible; the means of it so efficacious and powerful, the entrances of it so deceitful, subtle, insensible, and plausible;

our weakness, our unwatchfulness, so unspeakable, that we cannot in the least keep or preserve ourselves from it: we fail both in wisdom and power for this work.

Let the heart then commune with itself and say, I am poor and weak, Satan is subtle, cunning, powerful; watching constantly for advantages against my soul: the world earnest, pressing, and full of specious pleas, innumerable pretences, and ways of deceit; my own corruption violent and tumultuating, enticing, entangling, conceiving sin, and warring in me, against me. Occasions and advantages of temptation innumerable in all things I have done or suffer, in all businesses and persons with whom I converse. The first beginnings of temptation insensible and plausible; so that left unto myself I shall not know that I am ensnared, until my bonds be made strong, and sin hath got ground in my heart; therefore on God alone will I rely for preservation, and continually will I look up to him, on that account. This will make the soul be always committing itself to the care of God, resting itself on him; and to do nothing, undertake nothing, &c. without asking counsel of him. So that a double advantage will arise from the observation of this direction, both of singular use for the soul's preservation from the evil feared.

(1.) The engagement of the grace and compassion of God, who hath called the fatherless and helpless to rest upon him; nor did ever soul fail of supplies, who, in a sense of want, rolled itself on him, on the account of his gracious invitation.

(2.) The keeping of it in such a frame, as on various accounts, is useful for its preservation; he that looks to God for assistance in a due manner, is both sensible of his danger, and conscientiously careful in the use of means to preserve himself, which two, of what importance they are in this case, may easily be apprehended, by them who have their hearts exercised in these things.

3. This also is in it, act faith on the promise of God for preservation. To believe that he will preserve us, is a means of preservation. For this God will certainly do, or make a way for us to escape out of temptation, if we fall into it, under such a believing frame. We are to pray for what God hath promised. Our requests are to be regulated by

his promises and commands, which are of the same extent; faith closes with the promises, and so finds relief in this case. This James instructs us in; chap. i. 5. 7. What we want we must ask of God: but we must ask it in faith, for otherwise we must not think that we shall receive any thing of the Lord. This then also is in this direction of our Saviour; that we act faith on the promises of God, for our preservation out of temptation. He hath promised that he will keep us in all our ways; that we shall be directed in a way, that though we are fools, 'we shall not err therein;' Isa. xxxv. 8. that he will lead us, guide us, and deliver us from the evil one. Set faith on work on these promises of God, and expect a good and comfortable issue. It is not easily conceived, what a train of graces faith is attended withal, when it goes forth to meet Christ in the promises; nor what a power for the preservation of the soul lies in this thing: but I have spoken to this elsewhere.[b]

4. Weigh these things severally, and,

(1.) Take prayer into consideration; to pray that we enter not into temptation, is a means to preserve us from it. Glorious things are by all men that know aught of those things, spoken of this duty; and yet the truth is, not one half of its excellency, power, and efficacy is known. It is not my business to speak of it in general; but this I say as to my present purpose: he that would be little in temptation, let him be much in prayer. This calls in the suitable help and succour that is laid up in Christ for us; Heb. iv. 16. This casteth our souls into a frame of opposition to every temptation. When Paul had given instruction for the taking to ourselves the whole armour of God, that we may resist and stand in the time of temptation, he adds this general close of the whole; Eph. vi. 18. 'Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto, with all perseverance and supplication.'

Without this all the rest will be of no efficacy for the end proposed. And therefore consider what weight he lays on it: 'praying always,' that is, at all times and seasons, or be always ready and prepared for the discharge of that duty; Luke xviii. 1. Eph. vi. 18. 'With all prayer and supplication in the Spirit;' putting forth all kinds of desires unto

[b] Mortification of sin in believers.

God, that are suited to our condition, according to his will, and which we are assisted in by the Spirit, and watching thereunto, lest we be diverted by any thing whatever; and that not for a little while, but with all perseverance; continuance lengthened out to the utmost, so shall we stand. The soul so framed, is in a sure posture; and this is one of the means without which this work will not be done. If we do not abide in prayer, we shall abide in cursed temptations. Let this then be another direction. Abide in prayer, and that expressly to this purpose; that we enter not into temptations: let this be one part of our daily contending with God; that he would preserve our souls, and keep our hearts and our ways, that we be not entangled; that his good and wise providence will order our ways and affairs, that no pressing temptation befall us; that he would give us diligence, carefulness, and watchfulness over our own ways: so shall we be delivered, when others are held with the cords of their own folly.

CHAP. VI.

Of watching that we enter not into temptation: the nature and efficacy of that duty. The first part of it, as to the special seasons of temptation.
1. *The season; in unusual prosperity.* *The* 2. *In a slumber of grace.*
3. *A season of great spiritual enjoyments.* *The* 4. *A season of self-confidence.*

THE other part of our Saviour's direction, namely, to watch, is more general, and extends itself to many particulars; I shall fix on some things that are contained therein.

1. Watch the seasons wherein men usually do enter into temptation.

There are sundry seasons, wherein an hour of temptation is commonly at hand; and will unavoidably seize upon the soul, unless it be delivered by mercy in the use of watchfulness. When we are under such a season, then are we peculiarly to be upon our guard that we enter not into, that we fall not under the power of temptation. Some of those seasons may be named.

(1.) A season of unusual outward prosperity is usually

accompanied with an hour of temptation. Prosperity and temptation go together; yea, prosperity is a temptation; many temptations; and that because without eminent supplies of grace, it is apt to cast a soul into a frame and temper exposed to any temptation, and provides it with fuel and food for all; it hath provision for lust; and darts for Satan.

The wise man tells us, that the 'prosperity of fools destroys them;' Prov. i. 31. It hardens them in their way, makes them despise instruction, and put the evil day (whose terror should influence them into amendment) far from them. Without a special assistance, it hath an inconceivably malignant influence on believers themselves. Hence Agur prays against riches, because of the temptation that attends them, 'Lest,' saith he, 'I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord?' Prov. xxx. 8, 9. Lest, being filled with them he should forget the Lord; as God complains that his people did, Hos. xiii. 6. We know how David was mistaken in this case, Psal. xxx. 6. 'I said in my prosperity, I shall never be moved:' all is well, and will be well, but what was at hand, what lay at the door, that David thought not of? ver. 7. 'Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled:' God was ready to hide his face, and David to enter into a temptation of desertion, and he knew it not.

As then unto a prosperous condition. I shall not run cross to Solomon's counsel, 'In the day of prosperity rejoice;' Eccles. vii. 14. Rejoice in the God of thy mercies, who doth thee good in his patience and forbearance, notwithstanding all thy unworthiness: yet I may add to it from the same foundation of wisdom, 'Consider also, lest evil lie at the door.' A man in that state is in the midst of snares; Satan hath many advantages against him: he forgeth darts out of all his enjoyments, and if he watch not, he will be entangled before he is aware.

Thou wantest that which should poise and ballast thy heart. Carnality in religion will be apt to creep upon thee, and lays the soul open to all temptations in their full strength. Satisfaction and delight in creature enjoyments of the soul, will be apt to grow upon thee. Be vigilant, be circumspect, or thou

Job says, that in his affliction God

made his heart soft; chap. xxiii. 16. There is a hardness, an insensible want of spiritual sense, gathered in prosperity, that if not watched against, will expose the heart to the deceits of sin and baits of Satan: watch and pray in this season; many men's negligence in it hath cost them dear, their woful experience cries out to take heed. Blessed is he that feareth always; but especially in a time of prosperity.

(2.) As in part was manifested before, a time of the slumber of grace, of neglect in communion with God, of formality in duty, is a season to be watched in, as that which hath certainly some other temptation attending it.

Let a soul in such an estate awake and look about him; his enemy is at hand, and he is ready to fall into such a condition as may cost him dear all the days of his life: his present estate is bad enough in itself; but it is an indication of that which is worse, that lies at the door. The disciples that were with Christ in the mount, had not only a bodily, but a spiritual drowsiness upon them. What says our Saviour to them? 'Arise, watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation.' We know how near one of them was to a bitter hour of temptation, and not watching as he ought, he immediately entered into it.

I mentioned before the case of the spouse, Cant. v. 2—5. she slept, and was drowsy, and unwilling to gird up herself to a vigorous performance of duties, in a way of quick active communion with Christ. Before she is aware, she hath lost her beloved; then she moans, inquires, cries, endures woundings, reproaches, and all, before she obtains him again. Consider then, O poor soul, thy state and condition! doth thy light burn dim? or though it give to others as great a blaze as formerly, yet thou seest not so clearly the face of God in Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 6. by it as thou hast done? Is thy zeal cold? or if it do the same works as formerly, yet thy heart is not warmed with the love of God, and to God, in them as formerly, but only thou proceedest in the course thou hast been in? Art thou negligent in the duties of praying or hearing? Or if thou dost observe them, thou doest it not with that life and vigour as formerly? Dost thou flag in thy profession? Or if thou keep it up, yet thy wheels are oiled by some sinister respects from within or without? Does thy delight in the people of God faint and grow cold?

Or is thy love to them changing from that which is purely spiritual, into that which is very carnal, upon the account of suitableness of principles, and natural spirits, if not worse foundations? If thou art drowsing in such a condition as this, take heed, thou art falling into some woful temptation, that will break all thy bones, and give thee wounds that shall stick by thee all the days of thy life. Yea, when thou awakest, thou wilt find that it hath indeed laid hold of thee already, though thou perceivedst it not; it hath smitten and wounded thee, though thou hast not complained, nor sought for relief or healing.

Such was the state of the church of Sardis, Rev. iii. 2. the things that remained were ready to die: be watchful, says our Saviour, and strengthen them, or a worse thing will befall thee: if any that reads the word of this direction be in this condition, if he hath any regard of his poor soul, let him now awake, before he be entangled beyond recovery. Take this warning from God; despise it not.

(3.) A season of great spiritual enjoyments, is often by the malice of Satan, and the weakness of our hearts, turned into a season of danger, as to this business of temptation.

We know how the case stood with Paul, 2 Cor. xii. 7. he had glorious spiritual revelations of God and Jesus Christ; instantly Satan falls upon him; a messenger from him buffets him, so that he earnestly begs its departure; but yet is left to struggle with it. God is pleased sometimes to give us especial discoveries of himself and his love; to fill the heart with his kindness, Christ takes us into the banqueting-house, and gives our hearts their fills of love; and this by some signal work of his Spirit, overpowering us with a sense of love, in the unspeakable privilege of adoption, and so fills our souls with joy unspeakable and glorious. A man would think, this was the securest condition in the world: what soul does not cry with Peter in the mount; 'It is good for me to be here,' to abide here for ever? But yet very frequently some bitter temptation is now at hand. Satan sees, that being possessed by the joy before us, we quickly neglect many ways of approach to our souls, wherein he seeks and finds advantages against us. Is this then our state and condition? Does God at any time give us to drink of the rivers of pleasure that are at his right hand, and sa-

tisfy our souls with his kindness as with marrow and fatness? Let us not say, we shall never be moved; we know not how soon God may hide his face, or a messenger from Satan may buffet us.

Besides, there lies oftentimes a greater and worse deceit in this business. Men cheat their souls with their own fancies, instead of a sense of God's love by the Holy Ghost; and when they are lifted up with their imaginations, it is not expressible how fearfully they are exposed to all manner of temptations; and how then are they able to find relief against their consciences, from their own foolish fancies, and deceivings wherewith they sport themselves? May we not see such every day? persons walking in the vanities and ways of this world, yet boasting of their sense of the love of God; shall we believe them? We must not then believe truth itself; and how woful then must their condition needs be?

(4.) A fourth season, is a season of self-confidence; then usually temptation is at hand.

The case of Peter is clear unto this; 'I will not deny thee, though all men should deny thee, I will not;' though I were to die for it, I would not do it. This said the poor man, when he stood on the very brink of that temptation, that cost him in the issue such bitter tears. And this taught him so far to know himself all his days, and gave him such acquaintance with the state of all believers, that when he had received more of the Spirit and of power, yet he had less of confidence, and saw it was fit that others should have so also; and therefore persuades all men to 'pass the time of their sojourning here in fear;' 1 Pet. i. 17. not to be confident and high, as he was, lest, as he did, they fall. At the first trial he compares himself with others, and vaunts himself above them; 'Though all men should forsake thee, yet I will not;' he fears every man more than himself; but when our Saviour afterward comes to him, and puts him directly upon the comparison, 'Simon Peter, lovest thou me, more than these?' John xi. 15. he hath done comparing himself with others, and only cryeth, 'Lord, thou knowest that I love thee;' he will lift up himself above others no more. Such a season oftentimes falls out. Temptations are abroad in the world; false doctrines, with innumerable other allurements and provocations; we are ready every one to be very

confident, that we shall not be surprised with them: though all men should fall into these follies, yet we would not; surely we shall never go off from our walking with God; it is impossible our hearts should be so sottish: but says the apostle, 'Be not high minded, but fear; let him that standeth take heed lest he fall.' Wouldest thou think that Peter, who had walked on the sea with Christ, confessed him to be the Son of God, been with him on the mount when he heard the voice from the excellent glory, should at the word of a servant-girl, when there was no legal inquisition after him, no process against him, nor any one in his condition, instantly fall a cursing and swearing that he knew him not? Let them take heed of self-confidence who have any mind to take heed of sin. And this is the first thing in our watching, to consider well the seasons wherein temptation usually makes its approaches to the soul, and be armed against them. And these are some of the seasons, wherein temptations are nigh at hand.

CHAP. VII.

Several acts of watchfulness against temptation proposed. Watch the heart. What it is to be watched in and about. Of the snares lying in men's natural tempers. Of peculiar lusts. Of occasions suited to them. Watching to lay in provision against temptation. Directions for watchfulness in the first approaches of temptation. Directions after entering into temptation.

THAT part of watchfulness against temptation which we have considered, regards the outward means, occasions, and advantages of temptation; proceed we now to that which respects the heart itself which is wrought upon, and entangled by temptation: watching or keeping of the heart, which above all keepings we are obliged unto, comes within the compass of this duty also; for the right performance whereof, take these ensuing directions:

1. Let him that would not enter into temptation labour to know his own heart, to be acquainted with his own spirit, his natural frame and temper, his lusts and corruptions, his natural, sinful, or spiritual weaknesses, that finding where

his weakness lies, he may be careful to keep at a distance from all occasions of sin.

Our Saviour tells the disciples, that 'they knew not what spirit they were of;' which, under a pretence of zeal betrayed them into ambition and desire of revenge. Had they known it, they would have watched over themselves. David tells us, Psal. xviii. 23. that he considered his ways, and 'kept himself from his iniquity,' which he was particularly prone unto.

There are advantages for temptations lying oftentimes in men's natural tempers and constitutions; some are naturally gentle, facile, easy to be entreated, pliable, which though it be the noblest temper of nature, and the best and choicest ground, when well broken up and fallowed for grace to grow in, yet if not watched over, will be a means of innumerable surprisals and entanglements in temptation. Others are earthy, froward, morose; so that envy, malice, selfishness, peevishness, harsh thoughts of others, repinings, lie at the very door of their natures, and they can scarce step out, but they are in the snare of one or other of them; others are passionate, and the like. Now he that would watch that he enter not into temptation, had need be acquainted with his own natural temper: that he may watch over the treacheries that lie in it continually; take heed lest you have a Jehu in you, that shall make you drive furiously; or, a Jonah in you, that will make you ready to repine; or a David that will make you hasty in your determinations, as he was often in the warmth and goodness of his natural temper. He who watches not this thoroughly, who is not exactly skilled in the knowledge of himself, will never be disentangled from one temptation or another, all his days.

Again, as men have peculiar natural tempers, which according as they are attended or managed, prove a great *fomes* of sin, or advantage to the exercise of grace; so men may have peculiar lusts or corruptions, which either by their natural constitution or education and other prejudices, have got deep rooting and strength in them. This, also, is to be found out by him, who would not enter into temptation. Unless he know it, unless his eyes be always on it, unless he observes its actings, motions, advantages, it will continually be entangling and ensnaring of him. This, then, is our sixth direction in this kind; labour to know thine own frame and

temper, what spirit thou art of; what associates in thy heart Satan hath, where corruption is strong, where grace is weak; what strong hold lust hath in thy natural constitution, and the like. How many have all their comforts blasted, and peace disturbed, by their natural passion and peevishness? How many are rendered useless in the world, by their frowardness and discontent? How many are disquieted even by their own gentleness and facility? Be acquainted then with thine own heart, though it be deep, search it: though it be dark, inquire into it: though it give all its distempers other names, than what are their due, believe it not. Were not men utter strangers to themselves, did they not give flattering titles to their natural distempers, did they not strive rather to justify, palliate, or excuse the evils of their hearts, that are suited to their natural tempers and constitutions, than to destroy them, and by these means keep themselves off from taking a clear and distinct view of them; it were impossible that they should all their days hang in the same briars without attempt for deliverance; uselessness and scandal in professors, are branches growing constantly on this root of unacquaintedness with their own frame and temper; and how few are there, who will either study them themselves, or bear with those who would acquaint them with them?

2. When thou knowest the state and condition of thy heart, as to the particulars mentioned, watch against all such occasions and opportunities, employments, societies, retirements, businesses, as are apt to entangle thy natural temper, or provoke thy corruption.

It may be, there are some ways, some societies, some businesses, that thou never in thy life escapedst them, but sufferedst by them more or less, through their suitableness to entice, or provoke thy corruption. It may be thou art in a state and condition of life, that weary thee day by day, on the account of thy ambition, passion, discontent or the like; if thou hast any love to thy soul, it is time for thee to awake, and to deliver thyself as a bird from the evil snare. Peter will not come again in haste to the high-priest's hall, nor would David walk again in the top of his house, when he should have been in the high places of the field. But the particulars of this instance are so various, and of such several natures in respect of several persons, that it is impos-

to enumerate them; Prov. iv. 14, 15. Herein lies no part of that wisdom, which consists in our ordering our conversation aright. Seeing we have so little power over hearts, when once they meet with suitable provocations, are to keep them asunder, as a man would do fire and combustible parts of the house wherein he dwells.

3. Be sure to lay in provision in store, against the approaching of any temptation.

This also belongs to our watchfulness over our hearts. You will say, what provision is intended, and where is it to be laid up? Our hearts, as our Saviour speaks, are our treasury. There we lay up whatever we have, good or bad; and hence do we draw it, for our use; Matt. xii. 35. It is the heart, then, wherein provision is to be laid up against temptation. When an enemy draws nigh to a fort or castle to besiege and take it; oftentimes if he find it well manned, and furnished with provision for a siege, and so able to hold out, he withdraws and assaults it not. If Satan, the prince of this world come, and find our hearts fortified against his batteries, and provided to hold out, he not only departs, but as James says, he flies; he will fly from us, James iv. 7. for the provision to be laid up, it is that which is provided in the gospel for us. Gospel provisions will do this work; that is, keep the heart full of a sense of the love of God in Christ: this is the greatest preservative against the power of temptation in the world. Joseph had this; and therefore, on the first appearance of temptation, he cries out; 'How can I do this great evil, and sin against God?' And there is an end of the temptation, as to him, it lays no hold on him, but departs. He was furnished with such a ready sense of the love of God, as temptation could not stand before; Gen. xxxviii. 9. 'The love of Christ constrains us,' saith the apostle, 'to live to him,' 2 Cor. v. 14. and so consequently, to withstand temptation. A man may, nay, he ought to lay in provisions of the law also; fear of death, hell, punishment, with the terror of the Lord in them. But these are far more easily conquered than the other: nay, they will never stand alone against a vigorous assault. They are conquered, or convinced persons every day: hearts stored with them will struggle for awhile, but quickly give over. But store the heart with a sense of the love of God in Christ; with the

eternal design of his grace, with a taste of the blood of Christ, and his love in the shedding of it; get a relish of the privileges we have thereby; our adoption, justification, acceptation with God; fill the heart with thoughts of the beauty of holiness, as it is designed by Christ, for the end, issue, and effect of his death, and thou wilt in an ordinary course of walking with God, have great peace and security as to the disturbance of temptations. When men can live and plod on in their profession, and not be able to say, when they had any living sense of the love of God, or of the privileges which we have in the blood of Christ; I know not what they can have to keep them from falling into snares. The apostle tells us, that the peace of God, φρουρήσει τὰς καρδίας, Phil. iv. 7. shall keep our hearts; φρούρα, is a military word, a garrison; and so φρουρήσει, is, 'shall keep as in a garrison.' Now a garrison hath two things attending it. First, That it is exposed to the assaults of its enemies. Secondly, That safety lies in it from their attempts. It is so with our souls: they are exposed to temptations, assaulted continually: but if there be a garrison in them, or if they be kept as in a garrison, temptation shall not enter, and consequently we shall not enter into temptation. Now how is this done? Saith he, The peace of God shall do it. What is 'this peace of God?' A sense of his love and favour in Jesus Christ. Let this abide in you, and it shall garrison you against all assaults whatever: besides, there is that in an especial manner, which is also in all the rest of the directions; namely, that the thing itself lies in a direct opposition to all the ways and means that temptation can make use of, to approach unto our souls. Contending to obtain, and keep, a sense of the love of God in Christ, in the nature of it, obviates all the workings and insinuations of temptation. Let this be a third direction, then, in our watching against temptation, lay in store of gospel provisions, that may make the soul a defenced place, against all the assaults thereof.

4. In the first approach of any temptation, as we are all tempted, these directions following are also suited to carry on the work of watching, which we are in the pursuit of.

(1.) Be always awake, that thou mayest have an early discovery of thy temptation; that thou mayest know it so to be. Most men perceive not their enemy, until they are

wounded by him. Yea, others may sometimes see them deeply engaged whilst themselves are utterly insensible; they sleep without any sense of danger, until others come and awake them, by telling them that their house is on fire. Temptation in a neuter sense is not easily discoverable, namely, as it denotes such a way, or thing, or matter, as is, or may be made use of for the ends of temptation; few take notice of it, until it is too late; and they find themselves entangled, if not wounded. Watch, then, to understand betimes the snares that are laid for thee; to understand the advantages thy enemies have against thee, before they get strength and power; before they are incorporated with thy lusts, and have distilled poison into thy soul.

(2.) Consider the aim and tendency of the temptation, whatever it be, and of all that are concerned in it. Those who have an active concurrence into thy temptation, are Satan, and thy own lusts. For thine own lust, I have manifested elsewhere, what it aims at in all its actings and enticings. It never rises up, but its intendment is the worst of evils. Every acting of it, would be a formed enmity against God. Hence look upon it in its first attempts, what pretences soever may be made, as thy mortal enemy; 'I hate it,' saith the apostle; Rom. vii. 15. that is, the working of lust in me, I hate it; it is the greatest enemy I have; oh! that it were killed and destroyed; oh! that I were delivered out of the power of it. Know then that in the first attempt or assault in any temptation, the most cursed, sworn enemy is at hand, is setting on thee, and that for thy utter ruin: so that it were the greatest madness in the world, to throw thyself into his arms, to be destroyed. But of this I have spoken in my discourse of mortification.

Hath Satan any more friendly aim and intention towards thee, who is a sharer in every temptation? To beguile thee as a serpent, to devour thee as a lion, is the friendship that he owes thee. I shall only add that the sin he tempts thee to against the law, it is not the thing he aims at; his design lies against thy interest in the gospel. He would make sin but a bridge, to get over to a better ground to assault thee, as to thy interest in Christ. He who perhaps will say to day thou mayest venture on sin, because thou hast an in-

terest in Christ; will to-morrow tell thee to the purpose, that thou hast none, because thou hast done so.

(3.) Meet thy temptation in its entrance with thoughts of faith concerning Christ on the cross: this will make it sink before thee. Entertain no parley, no dispute with it, if thou wouldest not enter into it. Say it is 'Christ that died,' that died for such sins as these. This is called 'taking the shield of faith to quench the fiery darts of Satan;' Eph. vi. 16. faith doth it, by laying hold on Christ crucified, his love therein, and what from thence he suffered for sin. Let thy temptation be what it will; be it unto sin, to fear or doubting for sin, or about thy state and condition, it is not able to stand before faith lifting up the standard of the cross. We know what means the Papists, who have lost the power of faith, use to keep up the form. They will sign themselves with the sign of the cross, or make aerial crosses; and by virtue of that work done, think to scare away the devil. To act faith on Christ crucified, is really to sign ourselves with the sign of the cross; and thereby 'shall we overcome that wicked one;' 1 Pet. v. 9.

(4.) Suppose the soul hath been surprised by temptation and entangled at unawares, so that now it is too late to resist the first entrances of it; what shall such a soul do, that it be not plunged into it, and carried away with the power thereof?

1. Do as Paul did; beseech God again and again, that it may 'depart from thee;' 2 Cor. xii. 7. and if thou abidest therein, thou shalt certainly either be speedily delivered out of it, or receive a sufficiency of grace not to be foiled utterly by it. Only, as I said in part before, do not so much employ thy thoughts about the things whereunto thou art tempted, which oftentimes raiseth farther entanglements; but set thyself against the temptation itself. Pray against the temptation that it may depart; and when that is taken away, the things themselves may be more calmly considered.

2. Fly to Christ, in a peculiar manner, as he was tempted; and beg of him to give thee succour in this 'needful time of trouble;' Heb. ii. 11. the apostle instructs us herein, 'In that he hath been tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.' This is the meaning of it; when you are tempted,

and are ready to faint, when you want succour, you must have it or you die; act faith peculiarly on Christ, as he was tempted; that is, consider that he was tempted himself, that he suffered thereby, that he conquered all temptations, and that not merely on his own account, seeing for our sakes he submitted to be tempted; but for us (he conquered in, and by himself, but for us) and draw, yea, expect succour from him; Heb. iv. 15, 16. lie down at his feet, make thy complaint known to him, beg his assistance, and it will not be in vain.

3. Look to him who hath promised deliverance; consider that he is faithful, and will not suffer thee to be tempted above what thou art able. Consider that he hath promised a comfortable issue of these trials and temptations. Call all the promises to mind, of assistance and deliverance that he hath made; ponder them in thy heart, and rest upon it, that God hath innumerable ways that thou knowest not of, to give thee in deliverance; as,

(1.) He can send an affliction that shall mortify thy heart unto the matter of the temptation, whatever it be; that that which was before a sweet morsel under the tongue, shall neither have taste, or relish in it unto thee, thy desire to it shall be killed; as was the case with David; or,

(2.) He can by some providence alter that whole state of things, from whence thy temptation doth arise; so taking fuel from the fire, causing it to go out of itself; as it was with the same David in the day of battle; or,

(3.) He can tread down Satan under thy feet, that he shall not dare to suggest any thing any more to thy disadvantage (the God of peace shall do it) that thou shalt hear of him no more; or,

(4.) He can give thee such supply of grace, as that thou mayest be freed, though not from the temptation itself, yet from the tendency and danger of it, as was the case with Paul; or,

(5.) He can give thee such a comfortable persuasion of good success in the issue, as that thou shalt have refreshment in thy trials, and be kept from the trouble of the temptation; as was the case with the same Paul; or,

(6.) He can utterly remove it, and make thee a complete conqueror. And innumerable other ways he hath, of keeping

thee from entering into temptation, so as to be foiled by it.

4. Consider where the temptation, wherewith thou art surprised, hath made its entrance, and by what means, and with all speed make up the breach: stop that passage which the waters have made to enter in at. Deal with thy soul like a wise physician; inquire, when, how, by what means thou fellest into this distemper, and if thou findest negligence, carelessness, want of keeping watch over *thyself*, to have lain at the bottom of it, fix thy soul there; bewail that before the Lord; make up that breach, and then proceed to the work that lies before thee.

CHAP. VIII.

The last general direction, Rev. iii. 10. *watch against temptation by constant keeping the word of Christ's patience, what that word is; how it is kept; how the keeping of it will keep us from the power of temptation.*

THE directions insisted on in the former chapters are *such*, as are partly given us in their several particulars, up and down the Scripture; partly arise from the nature *of the* thing itself. There is one general direction remains, which is comprehensive of all that went before, and also adds *many* more particulars unto them; this contains an approved antidote against the poison of temptation; a remedy, *that* Christ himself hath marked with a note of efficacy, and success that is given us, Rev. iii. 10. in the words of our Saviour himself to the church of Philadelphia: 'Because,' saith he, 'thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also *keep* thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell in the earth;' Christ *is* the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; as he dealt with the church of Philadelphia, so will he deal with us; if *we* keep the word of his patience, he will keep us from the hour of temptation. This then being a way of rolling the *whole* care of this weighty affair on him who is able to bear it, it requires our peculiar consideration.

And therefore I shall shew, 1. What it is to keep the word of Christ's patience, that we may know how to *per-*

form our duty. And, 2. How this will be a means of our preservation, which will establish us in the faith of Christ's promise.

1. The word of Christ is the word of the gospel; the word by him revealed from the bosom of the Father. The word of the Word; the word spoken in time of the eternal Word. So it is called, 'The word of Christ,' Col. iii. 16. or the 'gospel of Christ,' Rom. i. 16. 1 Cor. ix. 12. and the 'doctrine of Christ,' Heb. vi. 1. of Christ, that is, as its author, Heb. i. 1, 2. and of him, as the chief subject or matter of it; 2 Cor. i. 20. Now this word is called the 'word of Christ's patience,' or tolerance, and forbearance, upon the account of that patience and long-suffering which in the dispensation of it, the Lord Christ exerciseth towards the whole, and to all persons in it; and that, both actively and passively; in his bearing with men, and enduring from them.

(1.) He is patient towards his saints, he bears with them, suffers from them. He is 'patient to us-ward;' 2 Pet. iii. 9. that is, that believe. The gospel is the word of Christ's patience, even to believers. A soul acquainted with the gospel knows that there is no property of Christ rendered more glorious therein, than that of his patience; that he should bear with so many unkindnesses, so many causeless breaches, so many neglects of his love, so many affronts done to his grace, so many violations of engagements, as he doth; it manifests his gospel to be not only the word of his grace, but also of his patience. He suffers also from them, in all the reproaches they bring upon his name and ways: and he suffers in them; for in 'all their afflictions he is afflicted.'

(2.) Towards his elect, not yet effectually called, Rev. iii. 20. he stands waiting at the door of their hearts, and knocks for an entrance. He deals with them by all means, and yet stands and waits, until 'his head is filled with the dew, and his locks with the drops of the night;' Cant. v. 2. as enduring the cold and inconveniences of the night, that when his morning is come, he may have entrance; oftentimes for a long season, he is by them scorned in his person, persecuted in his saints, and ways, reviled in his word, whilst he stands at the door in the word of his patience, with his heart full of love towards their poor rebellious souls.

(3.) To the perishing world; hence the time of his king-

dom in this world, is called the 'time of his patience;' Rev. i. 9. he endures the vessels of wrath with much long-suffering, Rom. ix. 22. whilst the gospel is administered in the world, he is patient towards the men thereof, until the saints in heaven and earth are astonished, and cry out, 'How long?' Psal. xiii. 1, 2. Rev. vi. 10. and themselves do mock at him, as if he were an idol, 2 Pet. iii. 4. he endures from them bitter things; in his name, ways, worship, saints, promises, threats, all his interest of honour and love; and yet passeth by them, lets them alone, does them good; nor will he cut this way of proceeding short, until the gospel shall be preached no more; patience must accompany the gospel.

Now this is the word that is to be kept, that we may be kept from the hour of temptation. Three things are implied in the keeping of this word.

[1.] Knowledge. [2.] Valuation. [3.] Obedience.

[1.] Knowledge; he that will keep this word must know it, be acquainted with it; under a fourfold notion.

1st. As a word of grace and mercy to save him.

2dly. As a word of holiness and purity to sanctify him.

3dly. As a word of liberty and power to ennoble him, and set him free.

4thly. As a word of consolation to support him in every condition.

1st. As a word of grace and mercy able to save us: 'It is the power of God unto salvation;' Rom. i. 19. 'The grace of God that bringeth salvation;' Titus ii. 11. 'The word of grace, that is able to build us up, and to give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified;' Acts xx. 32. 'The word that is able to save our souls;' James i. 21. When the word of the gospel is known, as a word of mercy, grace, and pardon, as the sole evidence for life, as the conveyance of an eternal inheritance, when the soul finds it such to itself, it will strive to keep it.

2dly. As a word of holiness and purity able to sanctify him; 'Ye are clean through the word I have spoken unto you,' saith our Saviour; John xv. 3. To that purpose is his prayer, chap. xvii. 17. He that knows not the word of Christ's patience, as a sanctifying, cleansing word, in the power of it, upon his own soul; neither knows it, nor keeps

[redacted]ys knows not one step
[redacted]s, that the most are so
[redacted]tions; men full of self,
[redacted]almost all unclean lusts,
[redacted] Christ; see 1 Pet. xx.

[redacted]d power, to ennoble him
[redacted]only from the guilt of sin
[redacted]t is a word of grace and
[redacted]of sin, for that it doth as
[redacted]from all outward respects
[redacted]t entangle him, or enslave
[redacted]s freemen,' and in bondage
[redacted]r. vii. 23. we are not by it
[redacted] superiors, nor from any
[redacted]ii. 16. but in two respects,
[redacted], largeness of mind, power,

[redacted]e, as to the worship of God;

[redacted]le, slavish respects, unto the
[redacted]n the course of our pilgrimage;
[redacted], and noble spirit in subjection
[redacted]re is administered in it, a spirit
[redacted]nd of love, and of a sound mind;'
[redacted] nothing terrified; Phil. i. 28. not
[redacted]espect whatever; there is nothing
[redacted] gospel, than a mind in bondage, to
[redacted]stituting itself to the lusts of men, or
[redacted] world. And he that thus knows the
[redacted]ence, really and in power, is even there-
[redacted]nerable, from unspeakable temptations.
[redacted]rd of consolation to support him in every
[redacted] be a full portion in the want of all, it is
[redacted]with joy unspeakable and full of glory; it
[redacted], relief, refreshment, satisfaction, peace,
[redacted], boasting, glory, in every condition what-
ow the word of Christ's patience, thus to
is the first part, and it is a great part of
our preservation from the hour, and power

[2.] Valuation of what is thus known, belongs to the keeping of this word; it is to be kept as a treasure; 2 Tim. i. 14. τὴν καλὴν παραθήκην, that excellent 'depositum,' that is, the word of the gospel: 'keep it,' saith the apostle, 'by the Holy Ghost;' and, 'hold fast the faithful word;' Tit. i. 9. It is a good treasure, a faithful word, hold it fast. It is a word that comprises the whole interest of Christ in the world. To value that as our chiefest treasure, is to keep the word of Christ's patience. They that will have a regard from Christ in the time of temptation, are not to be regardless of his concernments.

[3.] Obedience; personal obedience, in the universal observation of all the commands of Christ, is the keeping of his word; John xiv. 15. Close adherence unto Christ in holiness, and universal obedience, then when the opposition that the gospel of Christ doth meet withal in the world, doth render it signally the word of his patience, is the life and soul of the duty required.

Now all these are to be so managed, with that intention of mind and spirit, that care of heart, and diligence of the whole person, as to make up a keeping of this word; which evidently includes all those considerations.

We are arrived then to the sum of this safeguarding duty; of this condition of freedom from the power of temptation; he that having a due acquaintance with the gospel in its excellencies, as to him, a word of mercy, holiness, liberty, and consolation, values it, in all its concernments as his choicest and only treasure; makes it his business, and the work of his life, to give himself up unto it in universal obedience, then especially, when opposition, and apostacy put the patience of Christ to the utmost, he shall be preserved from the hour of temptation.

This is that which is comprehensive of all that went before; and is exclusive of all other ways for the obtaining of the end purposed; nor let any man think without this, to be kept one hour from entering into temptation; wherever he fails, there temptation enters. That this will be a sure preservative, may appear, from the ensuing considerations:

(1.) It hath the promise of preservation, and this alone hath so. It is solemnly promised in the place mentioned to

the church of Philadelphia on this account. When a great trial and temptation was to come on the world, at the opening of the seventh seal, Rev. vii. 3. a caution is given for the preservation of God's sealed ones, which are described to be those, who keep the word of Christ; for the promise is, that it should be so.

Now in every promise there are three things to be considered.

[1.] The faithfulness of the Father who gives of it.

[2.] The grace of the Son which is the matter of it.

[3.] The power and efficacy of the Holy Ghost which puts the promise in execution. And all these are engaged for the preservation of such persons from the hour of temptation.

[1.] The faithfulness of God, accompanieth the promise. On this account is our deliverance laid; 1 Cor. x. 13. though we be tempted, yet we shall be kept from the hour of temptation; it shall not grow too strong for us. What comes on us we shall be able to bear; and what would be too hard for us, we shall escape. But what security have we hereof? Even the faithfulness of God; 'God is faithful who will not suffer you,' &c. And wherein is God's faithfulness seen and exercised? 'He is faithful that promised;' Heb. x. 23. his faithfulness consists in his discharge of his promises. 'He abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself;' 2 Tim. ii. 13. so that by being under the promise, we have the faithfulness of God engaged for our preservation.

[2.] There is in every promise of the covenant, the grace of the Son; that is, the subject matter of all promises. 'I will keep thee:' how? By my grace with thee: so that what assistance the grace of Christ can give a soul that hath a right in this promise, in the hour of temptation it shall enjoy it. Paul's temptation grew very high; it was likely to have come to its prevalent hour; he 'besought the Lord,' that is, the Lord Jesus Christ, for help; 2 Cor. xii. 8. and receives that answer from him, 'My grace is sufficient for thee;' ver. 9. that it was the Lord Christ and his grace, with whom he had peculiarly to do, is evident from the close of that verse; 'I will glory in my infirmity, that the power of Christ may rest upon me;' or the efficacy of the grace of Christ in my preservation, be made evident; so Heb. ii. 18.

[3.] The efficacy of the Spirit, accompanieth the promises. He is called the 'Holy Spirit of promise;' not only because he is promised by Christ, but also because he effectually makes good the promise, and gives it accomplishment in our souls. He also then is engaged to preserve the soul walking according to the rule laid down: see Isa. lix. 21. Thus where the promise is, there is all this assistance; the faithfulness of the Father, the grace of the Son, the power of the Spirit; all are engaged in our preservation.

(2.) This constant, universal keeping of Christ's word of patience, will keep the heart and soul in such a frame, as wherein no prevalent temptation, by virtue of any advantages whatever, can seize upon it, so as totally to prevail against it. So David prays, Psal. xxv. 21. 'Let integrity preserve me.' This integrity and uprightness, is the Old Testament keeping the word of Christ, universal close walking with God. Now how can they preserve a man? Why, by keeping his heart in such a frame, so defended on every side, that no evil can approach, or take hold on him? Fail a man in his integrity, he hath an open place for temptation to enter; Isa. lvii. 21. To keep the word of Christ, is to do it universally, as hath been shewed; this exercises grace in all the faculties of the soul; and compasses it with the whole armour of God: the understanding is full of light, the affections of love and holiness; let the wind blow from what quarter it will, the soul is fenced and fortified; let the enemy assault when, or by what means he pleaseth, all things in the soul of such a one are upon the guard; 'How can I do this thing and sin against God?' is at hand. Especially, upon a twofold account, doth deliverance and security arise from this hand.

[1.] By the mortification of the heart unto the matter of temptations. The prevalency of any temptation arises from hence, that the heart is ready to close with the matter of it. There are lusts within, suited to the proposals of the world, or Satan without. Hence James resolves all temptations into our own lusts, chap. i. 14. because either they proceed from, or are made effectual by them, as hath been declared. Why doth terror, or threats turn us aside from a due constancy in the performance of our duty? Is it not because there is unmortified, carnal fear abiding in us, that tumultuates in such a season? Why is it that the allurements of

nd compliances with men entangle us? Is it not r affections are entangled with the things and ions proposed unto us? Now keeping the word of tience, in the manner declared, keeps the heart to these things, and so it is not easily entangled Saith the apostle, Col. ii. 20. 'I am crucified with he that keeps close to Christ, is crucified with him, d to all the desires of the flesh and the world: as ly, chap. vi. 14. Here the match is broken, and all tangling love, dissolved. The heart is crucified to rld, and all things in it. Now the matter of all tempta- lmost is taken out of the world: the men of it, or the of it, make them up. As to these things, says the le, 'I am crucified to them' (and it is so with every one eeps the word of Christ); my heart is mortified unto ; I have no desire after them; nor affection to them, delight in them; and they are crucified unto me. The wns, glories, thrones, pleasures, profits, of the world, I nothing desirable in them; the lusts, sensual pleasures, e, respects, honours of men, name and reputation among m, they are all as a thing of nought; I have no value, nor imation of them. This soul is safeguarded from assaults manifold temptations. When Achan saw the goodly Ba- ylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold; first he coveted them, then he took them. Josh vii. 21. Temptation subtilely spreads the Babylonish gar- ment of favour, praise, peace, the silver of pleasure, or profit with the golden contentments of the flesh, before the eyes of men; if now there be that in them alive, unmortified, that will presently fall a coveting, let what fear of punishment will ensue, the heart or hand will be put forth unto iniquity.

Herein then lies the security of such a frame, as that described: it is always accompanied with a mortified heart; crucified unto the things that are the matter of our temptations; without which it is utterly impossible, that we should be preserved one moment when any temptation doth befall us. If liking, and love of the things proposed, insinuated, commended in the temptation, be living and active in us, we shall not be able to resist and stand.

[2.] In this frame the heart is filled with better things, and their excellency; so far as to be fortified against the

matter of any temptation. See what resolution this puts Paul upon; Phil. iii. 8. all is loss and dung to him. Who would go out of his way, to have his arms full of loss and dung? And whence is it, that he hath this estimation of the most desirable things in the world? It is from that dear estimation he had of the excellency of Christ; so ver. 10. when the soul is exercised to communion with Christ, and to walking with him; he drinks new wine, and cannot desire the old things of the world, for he says the new is better. He tastes every day how gracious the Lord is, and therefore longs not after the sweetness of forbidden things, which indeed have none. He that makes it his business to eat daily of the tree of life, will have no appetite unto other fruit, though the tree that bare them seem to stand in the midst of paradise. This the spouse makes the means of her preservation; even the excellency which by daily communion, she found in Christ and his graces, above all other desirable things. Let a soul exercise itself to a communion with Christ, in the good things of the gospel, pardon of sin, fruits of holiness, hope of glory, peace with God, joy in the Holy Ghost, dominion over sin, and he shall have a mighty preservative against all temptations. As the full soul loatheth the honeycomb; as a soul filled with carnal, earthly, sensual contentments finds no relish nor savour in the sweetest spiritual things; so he that is satisfied with the kindness of God, as with marrow and fatness, that is every day entertained at the banquet of wine, wine upon the lees, and well refined; hath a holy contempt of the baits and allurements that lie in prevailing temptations, and is safe.

(3.) He that so keeps the word of Christ's patience, is always furnished with preserving considerations, and preserving principles; moral and real advantages of preservation.

[1.] He is furnished with preserving considerations, that powerfully influence his soul in his walking diligently with Christ. Besides the sense of duty which is always upon him, he considers,

1st. The concernment of Christ, whom his soul loves in him and his careful walking. He considers that the presence of Christ is with him, his eye upon him, that he ponders his heart and ways, as one greatly concerned in his

deportment of himself, in a time of trial. So Christ manifests himself to do; Rev. ii. 19, 20. He considers all; what is acceptable, what is to be rejected: he knows that Christ is concerned in his honour, that his name be not evil spoken of by reason of him; that he is concerned in love to his soul; having that design upon him to present him holy, and unblamable, and unreprovable in his sight; Col. i. 22. and his Spirit is grieved where he is interrupted in this work; concerned on the account of this gospel, the progress and acceptation of it in the world; its beauty would be slurred, its good things reviled, its progress stopped, if such a one be prevailed against; concerned in his love to others, who are grievously scandalized, and perhaps ruined by the miscarriages of such. When Hymeneus and Philetus fell, they overthrew the faith of some, and says such a soul then, who is exercised to keep the word of Christ's patience, when intricate, perplexed, entangling temptations, public, private, personal, do arise; Shall I now be careless, shall I be negligent, shall I comply with the world, and the ways of it? Oh! what thoughts of heart hath he concerning me, whose eye is upon me? Shall I contemn his honour, despise his love, trample his gospel in the mire under the feet of men, turn aside others from his ways? Shall such a man as I fly, give over resistings? It cannot be. There is no man who keeps the word of the patience of Christ, but is full of this soul pressing consideration, it dwells on his heart and spirit, and love of Christ constrains him so to keep his heart and ways; 2 Cor. v. 10.

2dly. The great consideration of the temptations of Christ in his behalf, and the conquest he made in all assaults for his sake, and his God dwell also on his spirit. The prince of this world came upon him, every thing in earth or hell, that hath either allurement or affrightment in it, was proposed to him, to divert him from the work of mediation, which for us he had undertaken: this whole life he calls the time of his temptation; but he resisted all, conquered all, and is become a captain of salvation to them that obey him. And, says the soul, shall this temptation, these arguings, this plausible pretence, this sloth, this self-love, this sensuality, this bait of the world, turn me aside, prevail over me, to desert him who went before me, in the ways of all

temptations that his holy nature was obnoxious unto, for my good?

3rdly. Dismal thoughts of the loss of love, of the smiles of the countenance of Christ, do also frequently exercise such a soul. He knows what it is to enjoy the favour of Christ, to have a sense of his love, to be accepted in his approaches to him, to converse with him; and perhaps hath been sometimes at some loss in this thing, and so knows also, what it is to be in the dark, distanced from him. See the deportment of the spouse in such a case, Cant. iii. 4. when she had once found him again; she holds him, she will not let him go, she will loose him no more.

[2.] He that keeps the word of Christ's patience, hath preserving principles, whereby he is acted. Some of them may be mentioned.

1st. In all things he lives by faith, and is acted by it in all his ways; Gal. ii. 20. Now upon a twofold account hath faith, when improved, the power of preservation from temptation annexed unto it.

(1st.) Because it empties the soul of its own wisdom, understanding, and fulness, that it may act in the wisdom and fulness of Christ. The only advice for preservation in trials and temptations lies in that of the wise man, Prov. iii. 5. 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding.' This is the work of faith: it is faith; it is to live by faith. The great [cause of] falling of men in trials, is their leaning to, or leaning upon, their own understanding and counsel. What is the issue of it? Job xviii. 7. 'The steps of his strength shall be straightened, and his own counsel shall cast him down.' First he shall be entangled, and then cast down; and all by his own counsel, until he come to be ashamed of it, as Ephraim was; Hos. x. 6. Whenever in our trials, we consult our own understandings, hearken to self-reasonings, though they seem to be good, and tending to our preservation, yet the principle of living by faith is stifled, and we shall in the issue be cast down by our own counsels. Now nothing can empty the heart of this self-fulness, but faith, but living by it, but not living to ourselves, but having Christ live in us, by our living by faith on him.

(2dly.) Faith, making the soul poor, empty, helpless,

destitute in itself, engages the heart, will, and power of Jesus Christ, for assistance, of which I have spoken more at large elsewhere.

2dly. Love to the saints, with care that they suffer not upon our account, is a great preserving principle in a time of temptations and trials. How powerful this was in David, he declares in that earnest prayer, Psal. lxix. 6. 'Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake, Let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.' O let not me so miscarry, that those for whom I would lay down my life, should be put to shame, be evil spoken of, dishonoured, reviled, contemned on my account, for my failings. A selfish soul, whose love is turned wholly inwards, will never abide in a time of trial.

Many other considerations and principles, that those who keep the word of Christ's patience in the way and manner before described, are attended withal, might be enumerated, but I shall content myself to have pointed at these mentioned.

And will it now be easy to determine, whence it is that so many in our days, are prevailed on, in the time of trial; that the hour of temptation comes upon them, and bears them down, more or less before it? Is it not because amongst the great multitude of professors that we have, there are few that keep the word of the patience of Christ? If we wilfully neglect, or cast away our interest in the promise of preservation, is it any wonder, if we be not preserved? There is an hour of temptation come upon the world, to try them that dwell therein; it variously exerts its power and efficacy; there is not any way, nor thing, whereih it may not be seen acting and putting forth itself, in worldliness, in sensuality, in looseness of conversation, in neglect of spiritual duties, private, public, in foolish, loose, diabolical opinions, in haughtiness and ambition; in envy and wrath, in strife and debate, revenge, selfishness; in atheism and contempt of God, doth it appear. They are but branches of the same root, bitter streams of the same fountain, cherished by peace, prosperity, security, apostacies of professors and the like; and alas! how many do daily fall under the power of this temptation in general? How few keep their garments girt about them, and undefiled? And if any urging particular

temptation befall any, what instances almost have we of any that escape? May we not describe our condition, as the apostle that of the Corinthians in respect of an outward visitation; 'some are sick, and some are weak, and many sleep;' some are wounded, some defiled, many utterly lost: what is the spring and fountain of the sad condition of things? Is it not, as hath been said; we do not keep the word of Christ's patience in universal close walking with him; and so lose the benefit of the promise given and annexed thereunto?

Should I go about to give instances of this thing; of professors coming short of keeping the word of Christ, it would be a long work. These four heads would comprise the most of them. First, conformity to the world, which Christ hath redeemed us from, almost in all things, with joy and delight, in promiscuous compliances, with the men of the world. Secondly, neglect of duties which Christ hath enjoined, from close meditation to public ordinances. Thirdly, strife, variance, and debate among ourselves; woful judging and despising one another, upon account of things foreign to the bond of communion that is between the saints. Fourthly, self-fulness as to principles, and selfishness as to ends. Now where these things are, are not men carnal? Is the word of Christ's patience effectual in them? Shall they be preserved? They shall not.

Would you then be preserved, and kept from the hour of temptation; would you watch against entering into it, as deductions from what hath been delivered in this chapter, take the ensuing cautions.

1. Take heed of leaning on deceitful assistances; as,

(1.) On your own counsels, understandings, reasonings, though you argue in them never so plausibly in your own defence, they will leave you, betray you; when the temptation comes to any height, they will all turn about, and take part with your enemy, and plead as much for the matter of the temptation whatever it be, as they pleaded against the end and issue of it before.

(2.) The most vigorous actings by prayer, fasting, and other such means against that particular lust, corruption, temptation, wherewith you are exercised, and have to do. This will not avail you, if in the meantime there be neg-

lects on other accounts; to hear a man wrestle, cry, contend as to any particular of temptation, and immediately fall into wordly ways, wordly compliances, looseness, and negligence in other things it is righteous with Jesus Christ to leave such a one to the hour of temptation.

(3.) The general security of saints' perseverance, and preservation from total apostacy. Every security that God gives us, is good in its kind, and for the purpose for which it is given to us; but when it is given for one end, to use it for another, that is not good or profitable. To make use of the general assurance of preservation from total apostacy, to support the spirit in respect of a particular temptation, will not in the issue advantage the soul; because notwithstanding that, this or that temptation may prevail. Many relieve themselves with this, until they find themselves in the depth of perplexities.

2. Apply yourselves to this great preservation of faithful keeping the word of Christ's patience, in the midst of all trials and temptations.

(1.) In particular, wisely consider wherein the word of Christ's patience is most likely to suffer in the days wherein we live, and the seasons that pass over us, and so vigorously set yourselves to keep it in that particular, peculiarly. You will say, How shall we know wherein the word of Christ's patience in any season is like to suffer? I answer; Consider what works he peculiarly performs in any season; and neglect of his word in reference to them, is that wherein his word is like to suffer. The works of Christ, wherein he hath been peculiarly engaged in our days and seasons, seem to be these:

[1.] The pouring of contempt upon the great men and great things of the world, with all the enjoyments of it, he hath discovered the nakedness of all earthly things, in overturning, overturning, overturning, both men and things, to make way for the things that cannot be shaken.

[2.] The owning of the lot of his own inheritance in a distinguishing manner, putting a difference between the precious and the vile, and causing his people to dwell alone, as not reckoned with the nations.

[3.] In being nigh to faith and prayer, honouring them above all the strength and counsels of the sons of men.

[4.] In recovering his ordinances and institutions from the carnal administrations, that they were in bondage under by the lusts of men, bringing them forth in the beauty and the power of the Spirit. Wherein then in such a season must lie in the peculiar neglect of the word of Christ's patience? Is it not in setting a value on the world, and the things of it, which he hath stained and trampled under foot? Is it not in the slighting of his peculiar lot, his people, and casting them into the same considerations with the men of the world? Is it not in leaning to our own counsels and understandings? Is it not in the defilement of his ordinances, by giving the outward court of the temple to be trod upon by unsanctified persons? Let us then be watchful, and in these things keep the word of the patience of Christ, if we love our own preservation.

[5.] In this frame urge the Lord Jesus Christ with his blessed promises, with all the considerations that may be apt to take and hold the king in his galleries, that may work on the heart of our blessed and merciful High Priest, to give suitable succour at time of need.

CHAP. IX.

General exhortation to the duty prescribed.

HAVING thus passed through the considerations of the duty of watching, that we enter not into temptation, I suppose I need not add motives to the observance of it. Those who are not moved by their own sad experiences, nor the importance of the duty, as laid down in the entrance of this discourse, must be left by me to the farther patience of God. I shall only shut up the whole with a general exhortation to them, who are in any measure prepared for it, by the consideration of what hath been spoken. Should you go into an hospital, and see many persons lying sick and weak, sore and wounded, with many filthy diseases and distempers, and should inquire of them, how they fell into this condition, and they shall all agree to tell you, such, or such a thing was the occasion of it; by that I got my wound says one, and my disease says another; would it not make you a little careful

how, or what you had to do with that thing or place? Surely it would. Should you go to a dungeon, and see many miserable creatures bound in chains for an approaching day of execution, and inquire the way and means whereby they were brought into that condition, and they should all fix on one and the same thing, would you not take care to avoid it? The case is so with entering into temptation: ah! how many poor, miserably, spiritually, wounded souls have we every where? One wounded by one sin, another by another; one falling into filthiness of the flesh, another of the spirit: ask them now how they came into this estate and condition; they must all answer, alas! we entered into temptation, we fell into cursed snares and entanglements, and that hath brought us into the woful condition you see. Nay, if a man could look into the dungeons of hell, and see the poor damned souls that lie bound in chains of darkness, and hear their cries: what would he be taught? What do they say? Are they not cursing their tempters, and the temptations that they entered in? And shall we be negligent in this thing? Solomon tells us, that the 'simple one that follows the strange woman knows not that the dead are there, that her house inclineth to death, and her paths to the dead' (which he repeats three times), and that is the reason, that he ventures on her snares. If you knew what hath been done by entering into temptation, perhaps you would be more watchful and careful. Men may think that they shall do well enough notwithstanding; but 'can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burnt?' Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burnt? Prov. vii. 27, 28. No such thing; men come not out of their temptation without wounds, burnings, and scars. I know not any place in the world, where there is more need of pressing this exhortation, than in this: go to our several colleges, inquire for such and such young men; what is the answer in respect of many? Ah! such a one was very hopeful for a season, but he fell into ill company and he is quite lost. Such a one had some good beginning of religion, we were in great expectation of him, but he is fallen into temptation; and so in other places: such a one was useful and humble, adorned the gospel, but now he is so wofully entangled with the world, that he is grown all self, hath no sap nor savour; such a one was

humble and zealous, but he is advanced and hath lost his first love and ways; oh! how full is the world, how full is this place of these woful examples: to say nothing of these innumerable poor creatures, who are fallen into temptation by delusions in religion. And is it not time for us to awake before it be too late; to watch against the first rising of sin, the first attempts of Satan, and all ways whereby he hath made his approaches to us, be they never so harmless in themselves?

Have we not experience of our weakness, our folly, the invincible power of temptation when once it is gotten within us? As for this duty that I have insisted on, take these considerations:

1. If you neglect it, it being the only means prescribed by our Saviour, you will certainly enter into temptation, and as certainly fall into sin: flatter not yourselves; some of you are old disciples, have a great abhorrency of sin; you think it impossible you should ever be seduced so and so: but, 'let him (whoever he be) that standeth take heed lest he fall.' It is not any grace received, it is not any experience obtained, it is not any resolution improved, that will preserve you from any evil, unless you stand upon your watch: 'what I say to you,' says Christ, 'I say to all; watch.' Perhaps you may have had some good success for a time, in your careless frame: but awake, admire God's tenderness and patience, or evil lies at the door. If you will not perform this duty, whoever you are, one way or other, in one thing or other, spiritual or carnal wickedness, you will be tempted, you will be defiled, and what will be the end thereof? Remember Peter.

2. Consider that you are always under the eye of Christ, the great captain of our salvation, who hath enjoined us to watch thus, and pray that we enter not into temptation. What think you are the thoughts, and what the heart of Christ, when he sees a temptation hastening towards us, a storm rising about us, and we are fast asleep? Doth it not grieve him, to see us expose ourselves so to danger, after he hath given us warning upon warning? Whilst he was in the days of his flesh, he considered his temptation whilst it was yet coming, and armed himself against it: 'the prince of this world cometh,' says he, 'but hath no part in me.' And

shall we be negligent under his eye? Do but think that thou seest him coming to thee, as he did to Peter, when he was asleep in the garden, with the same reproof, 'What! canst thou not watch one hour?' Would it not be a grief to thee to be so reproved, or to hear him thundering against thy neglect from heaven, as against the church of Sardis? Rev. iii. 2.

3. Consider that if thou neglect this duty, and so fall into temptation, which assuredly thou wilt do, that when thou art entangled, God may withal bring some heavy affliction or judgment upon thee, which by reason of thy entanglement, thou shalt not be able to look on any otherwise, than as an evidence of his anger and hatred: and then what wilt thou do with thy temptation and affliction together? All thy bones will be broken, and thy peace and strength will be gone in a moment. This may seem but as a noise of words for the present, but if ever it be thy condition, thou wilt find it to be full of woe and bitterness: Oh! then let us strive to keep our spirits unentangled, avoiding all appearance of evil, and always leading thereunto: especially all ways, businesses, societies, and employments, that we have already found disadvantageous to us.

END OF VOL. VII.

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